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✓
The Lake English Classics

REVISED EDITION WITH HELPS TO STUDY

THREE AMERICAN POEMS

THE RAVEN

EDGAR ALLAN POE

THE COURTSHIP OF MILES STANDISH

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

SNOW-BOUND

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

✓
EDITED FOR SCHOOL USE

BY

GARLAND GREEVER ✓

UNIVERSITY OF INDIANA

SCOTT, FORESMAN AND COMPANY
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W. L.

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PREFACE.

The increasing use of selections from our native poets is one of the commendable changes in secondary education. That our poets are equal in merit to the greatest of England or of the world no competent critic would care to assert, but that they should be ignored is also far from reason. An acquaintance with them will minister to both culture and a national self-knowledge. For the sake of the latter the teaching of them should begin as far down as possible in the English curriculum. In connection with the former we may see that the same principle which chooses *The Merchant of Venice* rather than *Hamlet*, *The Lady of the Lake* rather than *In Memoriam*, for study in preparatory schools, applies to them; they appeal strongly to younger students. For these two reasons, therefore, it is well that they should be represented in the list of entrance requirements.

The aim of the present volume is to make easy the approach to three of the notable and typical poems of three of our best poets. The editor would suggest that, in the consideration of any one of the poems, the first thing to do is to read it with the least possible reference to comments. A more careful study may follow, but even then the beauty

of the poetry and the spirit of the writer are the things that should stand out in the student's mind.

The plan of editing and the method of annotating will largely explain themselves. In the biographical and critical sections the effort has been to include significant facts and distinctive phases rather than a mass of details which few students would comprehend or remember. In the notes the purpose has been to clear up difficulties and to stimulate by an occasional comment rather than to flaunt an editorial erudition. In omitting definitions—a plan violated but seldom in this volume—the idea has been that a free use of the dictionary on the part of the student will train the perceptions and make for accuracy of speech. It is the sincere hope of the editor that the work will prove flexible and adaptable, and that it will lead the student to crave further knowledge of the glories of our literature.

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS,
March, 1910.

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EDGAR ALLAN POE.

I.

Poe was born January 19, 1809, in Boston, Massachusetts, where his actor-parents were then filling a theatrical engagement. His father was of Celtic blood and the son of a Revolutionary patriot. His mother was of English descent. The parents died, within a few days of each other, at Richmond, Virginia; and thus at the age of two Poe was left, along with an older brother and a younger sister, without a protector. He was adopted by a tobacco merchant, Mr. John Allan, who became well-to-do. The future poet was a beautiful, bright child, and speedily became a good declaimer, a lover of horses and dogs, and the pet of the Allan household.

In his seventh year he was taken to England and put into school in a suburb of London. Reminiscences of the five years that followed may be traced in his story, *William Wilson*. Afterwards he spent five years in private academies in Richmond, where he distinguished himself in athletics, especially swimming and boxing, and in French. Here, too, he met, in the mother of one of his schoolmates, the first of his numerous Helens and Lenores. Doubtless she was attracted by the amiable and refined qualities which won for him through life the high regard of women. For months after her death he is said to have haunted

her grave. To her inspiration is due one of his most magical lyrics, *To Helen*, probably written when he was only fourteen.

He enrolled in the University of Virginia in 1826 and remained there a year, achieving distinction in Latin, French, and Italian, but confirming an inherited taste for drink, and gambling recklessly. Already it was beginning to be clear that, although his nature was unmoral rather than immoral, his life was destined to be tragic. A rupture with Mr. Allan, consequent upon his delinquencies, led to his going to Boston, where he published, in 1827, a thin volume of verse, *Tamerlane and Other Poems*. Void of the means of subsistence, he enlisted, under an assumed name, in the United States army. After two years of faithful service he obtained his release through Mr. Allan, and later secured an appointment to a cadetship at West Point. His impulsive and imperious nature could not brook the discipline, however, and he brought about his own expulsion. As Mr. Allan was thereafter completely alienated, Poe found himself in 1831 driven to reliance upon himself. A second literary venture, *Al Aaraaf, Tamerlane, and Minor Poems* (1829), had meantime proved as barren of financial profit as the first. He now issued another volume of poems, containing, with less notable pieces, *To Helen*, *Israfel*, *The City in the Sea*, *The Sleeper*, and *Lenore*; and plunged into a Bohemian life and a bitter struggle for very existence.

For the attainment of material success he was wholly unfitted both by nature and by training. He

was as perverse as he was unpractical, and there was a pettiness about him that made him hard to assist. Ingratitude was sometimes mingled with his folly. The age, too, was crude, unpoetic. Much of his work was a drudgery against which he chafed. Thus his passionate love for beauty was thwarted on every hand. His pen was his only resource; and, though he wielded it with speed and dexterity, the grim shadow of poverty continued to hang over him. Against his tendency to drink he fought bravely, and for long periods with success, though he was hampered by an irresolute will. In 1833, after two obscure years, he made a fair start in his literary life by winning a \$100 prize in Baltimore and thereby gaining the attention of John P. Kennedy, a public man who was also prominent as a writer of fiction. A position on the staff of *The Southern Literary Messenger* resulted. His work, especially his criticisms, gave the magazine a great reputation: but in 1837 he lost his position, largely through his own fault. Some years were spent, largely at hack work, in Philadelphia, in which city he held for short periods the editorship of *The Gentleman's Magazine* and *Graham's Magazine* and published (1840) his *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque*. Previously, in 1836, he had married his child-cousin, Virginia Clemm. His devotion to her was beautiful; and when in singing for him in 1842 she broke a blood vessel in her throat, he suffered the agony of many deaths. In 1844 he went to New York. The publication the next year of *The Raven* made him famous the world

over. The poem, along with others, was quickly included in book form; and another volume of *Tales* was given to the public.

Poe moved in 1846, with his wife and his loyal mother-in-law, to a cottage at Fordham, near the field of his labor in New York. Sick and poverty-stricken, he saw his Virginia fading from his side; and in January, 1847, wrapped in a military cloak that had been her last shield from the cold, he followed her body to the grave. He was no longer himself; his balance of mind, health of body, and strength of character were alike impaired; and the remainder of his life is a sad record of decline. Nevertheless, he published *Ulalume* late in 1847. He also wrote *Annabel Lee*, an exquisite tribute to his dead wife, and *The Bells*, though neither of these poems was printed during his lifetime. On September 30, 1849, he started, with \$1,500 raised by means of a subscription lecture, from Richmond to New York. On October 3 he was found, drugged and robbed, in an election booth—the back room of a saloon—in Baltimore. Four days later he died.

II.

Distinction fell to Poe in three fields of literary activity—criticism, the short story, and poetry.

It was as a critic that he enjoyed his chief contemporary fame. Almost alone among our early men of letters he possessed the necessary critical attributes

—a definite ideal in literature, exquisite sensibilities, and a high standard of excellence. To these he added an analytical turn of mind that enabled him to discern very quickly the qualities of promise in young writers. His criticisms, therefore, were often luminous and acute. Unfortunately, they too often adhered to the abusive methods of the old school and were marred by prejudice and personal rancor, as in his unwarrantable attack on the gentlest of our poets in an article entitled *Mr. Longfellow and Other Plagiarists*. Such strenuous censure brought twofold results—first, a perceptible improvement in the quality of American letters, and, second, a hostility toward Poe himself that sought by base means to blacken his memory.

In the world of fiction his influence is still greater. It cannot be denied that he was one of the originators of the short story as a distinctive literary form. The modern detective story, in particular, must ascribe its origin to him. Yet the marked ingenuity which he practiced and stimulated has been less fruitful as a model than his habit, seen in most of his best work, of laying the emphasis not on incident but on tone and impression. The purpose of a writer, he maintained, should be to work out, “with deliberate care, a certain unique or single effect.” Guided by this precept, he produced a series of tales that have a strange fascination and are, in some cases, absolutely flawless as specimens of art. They add to a Greek sense of form an oriental love for ornament, subdued to the purpose in hand by an unerring taste. They

are tempered, of course, by the peculiar disposition of the author. They may be divided into three classes, viz., stories of horror, stories of ratiocination or the unraveling of mysterious problems, and stories of the supernatural. Well-known examples are *The Pit and the Pendulum* and *The Black Cat*; *The Gold-Bug* and *The Purloined Letter*; and *The Fall of the House of Usher* and *Ligeia*.

It is with Poe as a poet that we are concerned. In this province, as in others, he is unique, alone—the Ishmael of American literature. And his rank is high. Indeed, it has come to be recognized that he is the only one of our poets who possessed genius in any strict sense of the word. He is the only one of his day who was entirely an artist, though Longfellow and Bryant have large claims; and he is the only one who adds to careful art the imagination and the plastic touch necessary to achieve anything assuredly lasting. Abroad he is one of the three American writers who have won a literary following, and his influence is more decided than Hawthorne's or Whitman's. In France particularly, his vogue is strong.

Though Poe is entitled to fairer laurels than our other poets, he must rest his poetical fame upon a dozen short lyrics. In the frugal body of his work he is comparable to Gray, Collins, and Keats. His meagre product, like that of these poets, has a rare distinction. *To Helen* is filled with a delicate and classic grace. *Israfel* has a rapturous and exalted fire and a yearning at the close for that imperishable perfection to which lofty souls must aspire. *The City*

in the Sea is shadowy, but vivid, lurid, terrible. *The Sleeper* distils the essence of a sorrowful and eerie vagueness. *The Haunted Palace* is a tremendous and ethereal picture of the mind's overthrow. *The Conqueror Worm* is the knell of human life and hope. *The Raven*, as Poe himself said, is the emblem—a superb one—of “mournful and never-ending remembrance.” *Ulalume*, in many ways his most characteristic poem, is a cloud-structure built from an elfin music. *The Bells* is the most triumphant wedding of sound to sense in the English language. *Annabel Lee* is as noble a love lyric as literature affords. There are, in addition, a few other pieces that a lesser genius might prize; but none, perhaps, fully worthy of Poe.

A reading of these poems, together with the lectures on *The Philosophy of Composition* and *The Poetic Principle*, will show Poe's merits and also his defects. The poems are clothed with a diction that is flexible and chaste. They are surcharged with a melody that is seldom surpassed. They are radiant with visions of beauty, a beauty afflicted and in ruins. Often they are brilliantly imaginative, always serene and secure in their grace and poise. They are frequently graphic, and yet they are permeated with a dreamy languor, a delicious vagueness that is both an end in itself and a power to suggest. They are everywhere replete with indefinable charms. Yet they exhibit hardly more than a single mood, a single theme; their range is fatally narrow, and it is only for the briefest glimpses that they lead us away from

the shadows of the sepulchre. They are almost too perfect; they have been worked over and over until we feel that they are not on fire with an imagination completely unfettered from the devices of form. Their life is not one with the life of nature; their imagery itself is drawn from a Dream-land that lies "out of Space—out of Time." They are not deeply human, sometimes not human at all; their passion is not vitally real, and the love they sing is well-nigh that of disembodied spirits. They are, while unstained by "the heresy of the didactic," also without that moral element which is present in the works of those writers who accept their duties in the world as it is. These last two deficiencies may perhaps be made to comprise the others. If the poems were more human, they would be more varied, more spontaneous, still more highly imaginative, more indissolubly linked with the heart of nature. If they were solidly based on moral truth they would be indispensable to mankind, not merely rare temples of beauty in the realm of art.

Poe's lack of a robust and virile substance places him immeasurably below the great world-figures in literature, such as Homer, Dante, and Shakespeare. Nor can we console ourselves with thinking that had he lived longer his achievement would have been of profounder value and wider scope. He had chosen his field and reaped therefrom the utmost harvest. The few themes of his precocious youth were perfected and enriched, but not increased, by his man-

hood: The limits set by his own character and by his literary theories gave no room for expansion. The lofty ideal expressed by Arnold—that of “seeing life steadily and seeing it whole”—it was not in the nature of things for Poe to approach. His objection to the long poem, his preference for such poetry as that of Shelley to that of Shakespeare, are alike significant, measuring his weakness and his strength. His crowning glory is that in a new country, in an age when technique was lacking and thin moralizing and sentimentality were rampant, he proposed to himself definite poetic ends, and went with admirable sureness to an achievement that is chaste and artistic. The charges that were brought against his originality are, on the whole, trivially founded. His earlier poetry was affected, it is true, by Byron, Moore, and Shelley. He owed some of the metrical qualities of *The Raven* to Mrs. Browning and to Albert Pike. There is sometimes a resemblance, in form and tone, between his works and those of Dr. Chivers, of Georgia, but Poe was less influenced by Chivers than has often been supposed. A kind of prototype he found in Coleridge, whose poetry made him tremble, he said, “like one who stands upon a volcano, conscious, from the very darkness bursting from the crater, of the fire and the light that are weltering below.” But he remains himself—the poet of death, of despair, and of the enchantment of things that are fragile and lovely. His verses will haunt the memories of men so long as the love for pure art endures.

III.

Two of Poe's theories of poetic art—both of them woven into the warp and woof of *The Raven*—have stirred not a little comment. One he expresses thus: "I hold that a long poem does not exist"; "what we term a long poem is, in fact, merely a succession of brief ones—that is to say, of brief poetical effects." By way of illustration he asserts that from its very length *Paradise Lost*, though poetical throughout, cannot, if read at one sitting, maintain the enthusiasm of the reader, but gives rise rather to "a constant alternation of excitement and depression." This contention for a total and unified impression is perfectly sound if we admit that in poetry lyrical and emotional effects alone are legitimate. It ignores the fact that the long poem belongs to an entirely different genre, and affords a fuller "criticism" of the whole of life. The second theory affirms that "that pleasure which is at once the most intense, the most elevating, and the most pure, is . . . derived from the contemplation of the beautiful"; that therefore "Beauty is the sole legitimate province of the poem"; that, in fact, "the Poetry of words is the Rhythmical Creation of Beauty"; and that, without "attempting to reconcile the obstinate oils and waters of Poetry and Truth," the bard who would allay his "thirst unquenchable" must wage "war on Vice solely on the ground of her deformity." Since universal experience attests, he explains further, that the tone by which the highest beauty is manifested is one of sadness, it follows that "the death . . .

of a beautiful woman . . . is the most poetical topic in the world." How often Poe acted upon this conclusion his readers need not be told. The theory itself yields a good corrective to the obtrusion of didactics into the realm of aesthetics; yet it savors too much of "art for art's sake," and pays but the slightest heed to that which is surely essential—a basic moral soundness.

In *The Philosophy of Composition* Poe details a process by which, he insists, *The Raven* was constructed. As the initial axiom he assumed "that every plot, worth the name, must be elaborated to its *dénouement* before anything be attempted with the pen." The germ of the poem lay in the desire to produce through verse a definite and striking effect. In casting about for means to this end the author evolved, not only the theme and the general tone, but the stanzaic structure as well. In the portrayal of the deepening of the hero's feeling from casual interest to overwhelming despair, a certain verisimilitude was given and curiosity was heightened and prolonged by such devices as making the lover mistake the first flutter outside for a "tapping" at the door, and by having him adopt, when he found only darkness, "the half-fancy that it was the spirit of his mistress that knocked." Contrast was deliberately employed in such matters as the tempestuous night and the physical serenity of the chamber: the ebon plumage of the bird and the marble of the bust upon which it perched; the quaint diction and fantastic air—"approaching as nearly to the ludicrous as was ad-

missible"—of some of the earlier parts, and the morbidness of the ultimate impression. Everything was rigorously suppressed to "the climacteric effect"; and had the poet, in the course of his task, been able to compose stanzas that were disproportionately vigorous, he would, "without scruple, purposely have enfeebled them." Suspicion of allegorical import was excluded until the very last, when the reader was dexterously apprised that all was symbolic of the memory that is sad and never-ceasing.

Poe's statement of his manner of construction we need not accept *in toto*. He himself gave a hint for modifying it when he declared earlier in life: "With me poetry has been not a purpose, but a passion." *The Raven* is not merely a thing of rule and recipe; in no wise did Poe, in his critical theorizing, account for its fire, its shaping imagination, its intangible glory. We may admit that it is more nearly a child of mathematics, a creature of logic, than some of his other poems, and therefore shows a less plastic genius and less convincing passion. Yet in its seductive melody, its necromancer's weirdness, its unforgettable picture of the struggle between a human soul and tormenting memories that will not down, there dwells an intense fascination. Indeed, with the exception of Gray's *Elegy*, *The Raven* is perhaps the best known and most widely admired short poem in the English language.

THE RAVEN

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered,
weak and weary,

Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten
lore,—

While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there
came a tapping.

As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my
chamber door.

“’Tis some visitor,” I muttered, “tapping at my
chamber door:

Only this and nothing more.”

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak
December,

And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost
upon the floor.

Eagerly I wished the morrow:—vainly I had
sought to borrow

From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for
the lost Lenore,

For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels
name Lenore:

Nameless here for evermore.

And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain

Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before :

15 So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating

“ ’Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door,

Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door :

 This it is and nothing more.”

Presently my soul grew stronger ; hesitating then no longer,

20 “ Sir,” said I, “ or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore ;

But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,

And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,

That I scarce was sure I heard you”—here I opened wide the door :—

 Darkness there and nothing more.

25 Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,

Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before :

But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,

And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, "Lenore?"

This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word, "Lenore:"

30 Merely this and nothing more.

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,

Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than before.

"Surely," said I, "surely that is something at my window lattice;

Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore;

35 Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery explore:

 'Tis the wind and nothing more."

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter,

In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of yore.

Not the least obeisance made he: not a minute stopped or stayed he;

40 But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door,

Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber door:

 Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into
smiling

By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance
it wore,—

45 “Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou.”

I said, “art sure no craven,

Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from
the Nightly shore:

Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night’s
Plutonian shore!”

Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore.”

Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear dis-
course so plainly,

50 Though its answer little meaning—little relevancy
bore;

For we cannot help agreeing that no living human
being

Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his
chamber door,

Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his
chamber door,

With such name as “Nevermore.”

55 But the Raven, sitting lonely on the placid bust,
spoke only

That one word, as if his soul in that one word he
did outpour,

Nothing further then he uttered, not a feather
then he fluttered,

Till I scarcely more than muttered, — “Other
friends have flown before;

On the morrow *he* will leave me, as my Hopes
have flown before."

Then the bird said, "Nevermore."

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly
spoken,

"Doubtless," said I, "what it utters is its only
stock and store,

Caught from some unhappy master whom unmer-
ciful Disaster

Followed fast and followed faster till his songs
one burden bore:

5 'Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy bur-
den bore

Of 'Never—nevermore.' "

But the Raven still beguiling all my fancy into
smiling,

Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of
bird and bust and door;

Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself
to linking

0 Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous
bird of yore,

What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and
ominous bird of yore

Meant in croaking "Nevermore."

This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable
expressing

To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my
bosom's core ;
75 This and more I sat divining, with my head at
ease reclining
On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamp-light
gloated o'er,
But whose velvet violet lining with the lamplight
gloating o'er
She shall press, ah, nevermore !

Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed
from an unseen censer
80 Swung by seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the
tufted floor.
“Wretch,” I cried, “thy God hath lent thee—by
these angels he hath sent thee
Respite—respite and nepenthe from thy memories
of Lenore !
Quaff, oh, quaff this kind nepenthe, and forget
this lost Lenore !”
Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore.”

85 “Prophet !” said I, “thing of evil ! prophet still,
if bird or devil !
Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed
thee here ashore,
Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land
enchanted—
On this home by Horror haunted—tell me truly,
I implore :

Is there—*is* there balm in Gilead?—tell me—tell
me, I implore!”

Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore.”

“Prophet!” said I, “thing of evil—prophet still,
if bird or devil!

By that Heaven that bends above us, by that God
we both adore,

Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the dis-
tant Aidenn,

It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels
name Lenore:

5 Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels
name Lenore!”

Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore.”

“Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!”
I shrieked, upstarting:

“Get thee back into the tempest and the Night’s
Plutonian shore!

Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy
soul hath spoken!

0 Leave my loneliness unbroken! quit the bust above
my door!

Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy
form from off my door!”

Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore.”

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still
is sitting

On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door ;

105 And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's
that is dreaming,

And the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws
his shadow on the floor :

And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating
on the floor

Shall be lifted—nevermore !

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

I.

Longfellow was born in Portland, Maine, on the 27th of February, 1807. He was the second of eight children and came of an old New England family. His father, a Harvard graduate and a lawyer, was at one time a member of Congress; his mother, who bore with constant sweetness of temper the trials of an invalid, could trace back her ancestry to John Alden and Priscilla Mullins, whose story the poet was to tell in *The Courtship of Miles Standish*.

Longfellow himself was a high-minded and active boy, quick-tempered but easily appeased, orderly, unselfish, and eager sometimes to impatience. In the beautiful and bustling town of Portland he found much to attract him, and stored his mind with memories that inspired not a few of his later poems. He also had access to his father's library, which was for that day, unusually full and well chosen. Here he became thoughtful and studious, though not melancholy. The first book to fascinate him was Irving's *Sketch Book*. The next year, when only thirteen, he began to cherish literary aspirations and contributed some verses to the *Portland Gazette*.

After finishing at Portland Academy, he entered Bowdoin College, an institution at that time sur-

rounded with Indian haunts and legends. Here he continued to write poetry, which was, of course, imitative and immature, and to cultivate his mind through miscellaneous reading. He gave enough attention to his studies, however, to graduate fourth in a class whose roll held some memorable names, not the least distinguished of which was that of Nathaniel Hawthorne.

The choice of a profession was a matter about which Longfellow was deeply perplexed. While he was strongly inclined toward literature, he saw the wisdom of his father's warning that the America of that day would not support the man who gave himself wholly to letters. Law, medicine, and the ministry he considered in turn, finally deciding in favor of the first. "This," said he, "will support my real existence, literature my *ideal* one." Fortunately, at this juncture the trustees of Bowdoin determined to establish a professorship of modern languages and to offer the position to Longfellow upon the condition that he travel in Europe for further study. These terms the poet was glad to accept.

Three delightful years, 1826-29, were spent among the southern nations of Europe, where the poet obtained a practical knowledge of French, Spanish, and Italian. In addition to a deepened scholarship, he acquired a passion for the romantic lore and scenery of the Old World that was to help make him an apostle of culture to the New. He now entered upon the duties of his professorship. So limited was the curriculum of that day that he was obliged to com-

pile his own text books. His responsibilities prolonged his poetical silence; but he published *Outre-Mer* (1833-34), a collection of prose sketches about things "Beyond the Sea," and furnished a few articles on the elementary phases of various literatures to the *North American Review*. To illustrate these articles he rendered into English a number of foreign poems, thus beginning that work as a translator in which, for many years, he was to exhibit deft skill, and through which he was to introduce Americans to much that was good in modern letters. In 1834 he was offered the most prominent position within his chosen field, the professorship of modern languages at Harvard. To prepare himself the more thoroughly he sailed the following year for eighteen months of study in northern Europe. On this second trip he gave special attention to German, and one of the results was the publication in 1839 of his prose romance, *Hyperion*, which was greatly flavored by German influence. It was on this trip also that his first wife, Mary Potter, to whom he had been married in 1831, died; and that he met Frances Appleton, who was to become his bride in 1843.

At Cambridge he first occupied and afterwards owned the famous Craigie house, which overlooked the Charles river, and in which Washington had been quartered for some months during the Revolution. In 1839 he issued a slender volume of poems, *The Voices of the Night*, in which were included, besides several pieces which he called *Earlier Poems*, such lyrics as *The Psalm of Life* and *Footsteps of Angels*.

This was the real beginning of his poetic career, and it brought him into instant and widespread popularity. *Ballads and Other Poems* appeared two years later, and contained *The Skeleton in Armor*, *The Wreck of the Hesperus*, *The Village Blacksmith*, *The Rainy Day*, and *Excelsior*. Seven brief lyrics under the title of *Poems of Slavery* were published in 1840. In this year also, *The Spanish Student*, a drama, came out as a serial. *The Belfry of Bruges* and *Other Poems*, though dated 1846, was given to the public at the end of the preceding year. In 1847 moreover, Longfellow published *The Poets of the Poetry of Europe*, and thus finished, with the execution of a single volume, his work as mere compiler and editor. He had "found himself," and was ready to begin the second and most fruitful period of his literary life.

Already he had started *Evangeline*. This celebrated poem came into print two years later and was widely acclaimed. It was followed by *The Seaside and the Fireside*, containing *The Building of the Ship*, in 1849; by *The Golden Legend*, the first and best part of an ambitious trilogy entitled *Christ—a Mystery*, in 1851; by the famous Indian legend of *Hiawatha* in 1855; and by *The Courtship of Miles Standish* in 1858. To this second and most fruitful period belong also *My Lost Youth*, *The Children's Hour*, and some of the best of the *Tales of a Wayside Inn*, the three parts of which were published, however, until 1863, 1872, and 1873, respectively. By 1854 the poet realized that his

come, outside his salary as professor, was adequate to his support; and, impelled by the wish to escape irksome confinement and to give more of his energy to poetry, he resigned the position he had honored at Harvard. He continued, however, to reside at Cambridge.

The third period of his literary life—the one devoted primarily to the translation of Dante—began abruptly. In 1861 the poet suffered a terrible bereavement in the death of his wife from accidental burns. To sustain him in this loss and to console him in the years that remained he had the sympathetic friendship of many of the choice spirits of the age. His children—three girls and two boys—were also a source of great comfort. Furthermore, his readers throughout the world were generous in their expressions of gratitude for the inspiration his poems had brought them, and the children of his native land honored him, while he was yet living, by celebrating his seventy-fifth birthday. During this period he published several new volumes, some of them devoted to drama; but the best part of his work had been done earlier, and excepting the excellent version of Dante and a few poems, including *The Hanging of the Crane*, *Morituri Salutamus*, and the sonnets, we do not treasure these productions. The poet died March 24, 1882. Just nine days before, he had penned, in *The Bells of San Blas*, his last poetic words:

Out of the shadow of night
The world rolls into light;—
It is daybreak everywhere.

II.

At the beginning of Longfellow's poetic life, and perhaps at the end of it, New England had not wholly shaken off the ascetic mood of the Puritan. A stern rectitude had frowned upon beauty, dismissed sentiment as trivial, and glared with intolerance upon the achievements of art. But now, mingled with this rigor was an unspoken longing for the warmth and color of life—a longing too timorous for passionate expression, but ready for emotions that were quiet and human. In such a people the sheer worshiper of beauty—a Keats or a Poe—would only have awakened alarm; but Longfellow, reared as he was in a cultured Puritan home, stimulated by travel, and combining with a fine alchemy the artistic and the moral instincts, convinced his neighbors, almost before they knew it, that life to be righteous need not be unlovely.

It is this simple and unconscious virtue which goes out from Longfellow that gives him his claim to distinction. The qualities we find in more vehement poets are qualities that he neither possesses nor seeks. Creative, profound, imaginative—save at the rarest intervals—he is not. Lofty passages and thunderous convictions are lacking to him. Concentrated strength is found in few places outside the sonnets, where the exactions of form brought a splendid compression. Intellectual subjects and subjects that require heat in the handling are not welcome to him. His taste is far better than his inspiration. In the *Poems of Slavery*, for instance, he has daintiness and finish

rather than rugged vehemence: and therefore he fails where the philippic anger of Whittier and the trenchant derision of Lowell succeed. Even where an innovation in form is needed, he is not daring in his departure; he casts about for the old and tried, though it be so long out of use that most people have forgotten it. He has no vital touch with the higher aspirations of the race, no enraptured vision of the future, no enthusiasm that, leaving him cosmopolitan in his sympathies, makes him also the incarnate spirit of one age or place. His peculiar power lies in telling effectively an absorbing story, in singing the cheerful acceptance of the lessons of life, in speaking bravely and plainly and sweetly of the emotions that are common to all. His pages are filled with purity, genuineness, sunshine. We think of him as one to whom were due an even and unruffled life and a serene old age. He resembles Irving, not only in his love for the beaten tracks, in his fondness for mediæval romance, and in his graceful assimilation of foreign culture, but also in the gentle manliness of his personal character.

Along with this tenderness of Longfellow went his quiet, scholarly habits. His impetus to write came in no small degree from his reading. This fact—to which his briefest lyric and his longest narrative alike attest—constitutes his weakness and his strength. Without his library he was lost. The mere mention of a book caused him to pause in fond contemplation, as we see in *The Courtship of Miles Standish*:

Open wide on her lap lay the well-worn psalm-book of Ainsworth,
Printed in Amsterdam, the words and the music together,
Rough-hewn, angular notes, like stones in the wall of a churchyard,
Darkened and overhung by the running vine of the verses.

His descriptions, as a rule, were borrowed from the written page rather than taken from nature, and therefore lack the robust local flavor of Whittier's. Some passages, as the "goblet" figure in *The Bridge*, smell decidedly of the lamp. His metrical form was also markedly derivative, being in a great many cases adopted from foreign models; *The Building of the Ship* and *Hiawatha* are instances. On the other hand, his familiarity with a great range of literature contributed, no doubt, to his versatility and his mastery of form. In the former quality he exceeds all our other writers; in the latter, all except Poe. He tried, in the course of his prolific career, nearly every species of poetic composition, making a clear failure only in the dramatic; and used all measures with facility except heroic blank verse. In his choice of themes and in his selection of a metrical medium he showed the delicate tact of the true artist. The symmetry of his pieces was too often marred by his tendency to tack on a moral at the end, but otherwise his sense of what was fit and attractive was unusually sure.

Of all our poets Longfellow is by far the most generally read. He is known and loved at thousands of firesides where writers who are greater and more complex are never guests. He is the poet of the home, of

childhood, of simple affections, and of pure-hearted, moral life. In his verse we feel constantly the spirit of the man—one who was compassionate, courteous, home-loving; the true friend and benefactor of us all.

III.

For a right appreciation of *The Courtship of Miles Standish* it is necessary that we should bear in mind the main incidents in the story of the Pilgrims. For between the actual history of the colony and Longfellow's narrative there are some discrepancies. The events detailed by the poet are supposed to occur within a year after the landing. In reality a number of them occurred three or even four years later. The church was not standing and of course no howitzer was planted on its roof at the time suggested by the poet. The rattlesnake-skin challenge was not made until January, 1622, and the real Standish was not prominent in the incident. The expedition against the Indians was not made and "the ships of the merchants" (l. 825) did not come until the third year of the settlement. Cattle were not brought to the colony until the fourth year, l. 826 to the contrary notwithstanding. Even in such matters as Priscilla's seeming residence away from the seven houses in Plymouth there are slight deviations from strict fact. How can these changes be justified? The poet was not primarily a chronicler of actual incidents; he was telling a story and using every means to make it effective. A rigid adherence to facts he was forced to discard for the sake of poetic emphasis. If John

Alden's struggle between love and friendship had been postponed three or four years, the story would have been robbed of his dramatic temptation to return that first spring on the *Mayflower*—the only deserter! If the rattlesnake-skin challenge had been omitted, we should miss one striking instance of the choleric and impetuous nature of the captain. If the cattle had not hastened their coming, the bucolic wedding scene at the close of the poem would have been deprived of much of its charm. Thus every variation from historic fidelity has an ample cause back of it.

Longfellow used a good deal of freedom also in his treatment of the principal characters. Almost all we know of the real John Alden is conveyed in Bradford's words that he "was hired for a cooper at Southampton, where the ship victualled, and being a hopeful young man, was much desired, but left to his own liking to go or stay when he came here." The poet represents him as leaving England for love of Priscilla—a fact to which Standish seems strangely blind. The Priscilla Mullins of history was in all likelihood of Huguenot extraction, and probably was not with the Pilgrims when they were in Holland. Thus the poet, who in this detail strictly follows the conjectural fact, does not have her mingle memories of that country with her charming description of English lanes and streets (ll. 269-279). Her father, as Bradford tells us, died during the first winter in the New World. Miles Standish, the bluff Captain of Plymouth, did not belong to the Church of the Puritans. He liked the people, however, and they

welcomed him for the military prowess he had showed in the course of an adventurous life. He came from the Duxbury Hall or Protestant branch of an old Lancashire family. (See l. 320 ff.). It seems that he was not permanently downcast by his rejection at Priscilla's hands. On the contrary, he consoled himself by leading to the altar another maiden of whom we know little.

Though altering the outer details of history, the poet gives us a penetrating insight into the everyday life, the dress, the habits, the homes, and the stern, religious life of the Puritans. He shows us, on the one hand, how their very language was saturated with the spirit of the Bible, and, on the other, how they could mete out vengeance upon those whom they deemed the enemies of the Lord (l. 818). Moreover, he tells a story which, through its excellence of structure (a thing at which Longfellow was not always sure) and its human interest, has the power to stir, sustain, and convince the emotions. Finally, he lets ripple across his pages a bracing breath from the ocean, the one object in nature which he treats with unfailing skill and affection.

This is not the place for an inquiry into his use of the Homeric hexameter, or for a technical discourse on the interspersion in it of spondees with dactyls. Suffice it to say that in *Evangeline* the poet had adopted, with considerable success, a measure esteemed sacred to the epics of Greece and Rome and supposed to be useless in English verse. This measure he employed anew in *The Courtship of Miles*

Standish. It consists, normally, of five poetic feet of three syllables each, followed by one foot of two syllables. The first syllable in each foot is heavy and on it the accent falls. L. 25 is typical:

This' is the | sword' of Da- | mas' eus I | fought' with in |
Flan' ders; this | breast' plate

Sometimes one heavy syllable is substituted for two light ones, so that the foot altogether contains but two syllables. Thus l. 84 would be scanned:

Home' ward' | bound' with the | tid' ings of | all' that' |
ter' ri- ble | win' ter.

If in several successive feet a heavy syllable takes the place of two lighter ones, a considerable variation from the normal rhythm is produced. L. 62 is an example:

Beau' ti- ful | Rose' of' | love' that' | bloomed' for' | me' by
the | way' side.

Beneath these metrical shiftings lurk many subtle beauties, and the student who searches them out is richly repaid. Scansion is of value also in that it aids in the pronunciation of unfamiliar words and proper names, as

Curved' at the | point' and in- | scribed' with its | mys' ti-
cal | Ar' a- bie | sen' tence (l. 9);

Fired' point'- | blank' at my | heart' by a | Span' ish' | ar'
ca- bu- | ce' ro (l. 28);

As' pin- et, | Sam' o- set, | Cor' bit- ant, | Squan' to, or |
Tok' a- ma- | ha' mon (l. 53).

THE COURTSHIP OF MILES STANDISH.

I.

MILES STANDISH.

- In the Old Colony days, in Plymouth the land of
the Pilgrims,
To and fro in a room of his simple and primitive
dwelling,
Clad in doublet and hose, and boots of Cordovan
leather,
Strode, with a martial air, Miles Standish the
Puritan Captain.
- 5 Buried in thought he seemed, with his hands be-
hind him, and pausing
Ever and anon to behold his glittering weapons of
warfare,
Hanging in shining array along the walls of the
chamber,—
Cutlass and corselet of steel, and his trusty sword
of Damascus,
Curved at the point and inscribed with its mystical
Arabic sentence,
- 10 While underneath, in a corner, were fowling-piece,
musket, and matchlock.
Short of stature he was, but strongly built and
athletic,
Broad in the shoulders, deep-chested, with muscles
and sinews of iron;
Brown as a nut was his face, but his russet beard
was already

Flaked with patches of snow, as hedges sometimes
in November.

15 Near him was seated John Alden, his friend and
household companion,

Writing with diligent speed at a table of pine by
the window :

Fair-haired, azure-eyed, with delicate Saxon com-
plexion,

Having the dew of his youth, and the beauty there-
of, as the captives

Whom Saint Gregory saw, and exclaimed, "Not
Angles but Angels."

20 Youngest of all was he of the men who came in
the Mayflower.

Suddenly breaking the silence, the diligent scribe
interrupting,

Spake, in the pride of his heart, Miles Standish
the Captain of Plymouth.

"Look at these arms," he said, "the warlike
weapons, that hang here

Burnished and bright and clean, as if for parade
or inspection !

25 This is the sword of Damascus I fought with in
Flanders : this breastplate,

Well I remember the day ! once saved my life in a
skirmish :

Here in front you can see the very dint of the
bullet

Fired point-blank at my heart, by a Spanish arca-
bucero.

Had it not been of sheer steel, the forgotten bones
of Miles Standish

30 Would at this moment be mould, in their grave in
the Flemish morasses."

Thereupon answered John Alden, but looked not
up from his writing:

"Truly the breath of the Lord hath slackened the
speed of the bullet;

He in his mercy preserved you, to be our shield
and our weapon!"

Still the Captain continued, unheeding the words
of the stripling:

35 "See, how bright they are burnished, as if in an
arsenal hanging:

That is because I have done it myself, and not left
it to others.

Serve yourself, would you be well served, is an
excellent adage;

So I take care of my arms, as you of your pens
and your inkhorn.

Then, too, there are my soldiers, my great, in-
vincible army,

40 Twelve men, all equipped, having each his rest
and his matchlock,

Eighteen shillings a month, together with diet
and pillage,

And, like Cæsar, I know the name of each of my
soldiers!"

This he said with a smile, that danced in his
eyes, as the sunbeams

Dance on the waves of the sea, and vanish again
in a moment.

45 Alden laughed as he wrote, and still the Captain
continued:

“Look! you can see from this window my brazen
howitzer planted

High on the roof of the church, a preacher who
speaks to the purpose,

Steady, straightforward, and strong, with irre-
sistible logic,

Orthodox, flashing conviction right into the hearts
of the heathen.

50 Now we are ready. I think, for any assault of the
Indians:

Let them come, if they like, and the sooner they
try it the better, —

Let them come if they like, be it sagamore, sachem,
or pow-wow,

Aspinet, Samoset, Corbitant, Squanto, or Toka-
mahamon!”

Long at the window he stood, and wistfully
gazed on the landscape.

55 Washed with a cold gray mist, the vapory breath
of the east-wind,

Forest and meadow and hill, and the steel-blue
rim of the ocean,

Lying silent and sad, in the afternoon shadows
and sunshine.

Over his countenance flitted a shadow like those
on the landscape,

Gloom intermingled with light: and his voice was
subdued with emotion.

60 Tenderness, pity, regret, as after a pause he pro-
ceeded:

“Yonder there, on the hill by the sea, lies buried
Rose Standish;

Beautiful rose of love, that bloomed for me by
the wayside!

She was the first to die of all who came in the
Mayflower!

Green above her is growing the field of wheat we
have sown there,

65 Better to hide from the Indian scouts the graves
of our people,

Lest they should count them and see how many
already have perished!”

Sadly his face he averted, and strode up and down
and was thoughtful.

Fixed to the opposite wall was a shelf of books,
and among them

Prominent three, distinguished alike for bulk and
for binding;

70 Barriffe's Artillery Guide, and the Commentaries
of Cæsar,

Out of the Latin translated by Arthur Goldinge
of London,

And, as if guarded by these, between them was
standing the Bible.

Musing a moment before them, Miles Standish
paused, as if doubtful

Which of the three he should choose for his consolation and comfort,

- 75 Whether the wars of the Hebrews, the famous
campaigns of the Romans,
Or the Artillery practice, designed for belligerent
Christians.

Finally down from its shelf he dragged the ponderous Roman,

Seated himself at the window, and opened the book, and in silence

Turned o'er the well-worn leaves, where thumb-marks thick on the margin,

- 80 Like the trample of feet, proclaimed the battle was hottest.

Nothing was heard in the room but the hurrying pen of the stripling,

Busily writing epistles important, to go by the Mayflower,

Ready to sail on the morrow, or next day at latest,
God willing!

Homeward bound with 'the tidings of all that terrible winter,

- 85 Letters written by Alden, and full of the name of Priscilla,

Full of the name and the fame of the Puritan maiden Priscilla!

II.

LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP.

Nothing was heard in the room but the hurrying
pen of the stripling,
Or an occasional sigh from the laboring heart of
the Captain,
Reading the marvellous words and achievements
of Julius Cæsar.

90 After a while he exclaimed, as he smote with his
hand, palm downwards,
Heavily on the page: "A wonderful man was this
Cæsar!

You are a writer, and I am a fighter, but here
is a fellow

Who could both write and fight, and in both was
equally skilful!"

Straightway answered and spake John Alden, the
comely, the youthful:

95 "Yes, he was equally skilled, as you say, with his
pen and his weapons.

Somewhere have I read, but where I forget, he
could dictate

Seven letters at once, at the same time writing his
memoirs."

"Truly," continued the Captain, not heeding or
hearing the other,

"Truly a wonderful man was Caius Julius Cæsar!

100 Better be first, he said, in a little Iberian village,

Than be second in Rome, and I think he was
right when he said it.

Twice was he married before he was twenty, and
many times after:

Battles five hundred he fought, and a thousand
cities he conquered:

He, too, fought in Flanders, as he himself has
recorded;

105 Finally he was stabbed by his friend, the orator
Brutus!

Now, do you know what he did on a certain occa-
sion in Flanders,

When the rear-guard of his army retreated, the
front giving way too,

And the immortal Twelfth Legion was crowded so
closely together

There was no room for their swords? Why, he
seized a shield from a soldier,

110 Put himself straight at the head of his troops, and
commanded the captains.

Calling on each by his name, to order forward the
ensigns;

Then to widen the ranks, and give more room for
their weapons:

So he won the day, the battle of something-or-
other.

That's what I always say; if you wish a thing to
be well-done,

115 You must do it yourself, you must not leave it to
others!"

All was silent again; the Captain continued his reading.

Nothing was heard in the room but the hurrying pen of the stripling

Writing epistles important to go next day by the Mayflower.

Filled with the name and the fame of the Puritan maiden Priscilla;

120 Every sentence began or closed with the name of Priscilla,

Till the treacherous pen, to which he confided the secret,

Strove to betray it by singing and shouting the name of Priscilla!

Finally closing his book, with a bang of the ponderous cover,

Sudden and loud as the sound of a soldier grounding his musket,

125 Thus to the young man spake Miles Standish the Captain of Plymouth:

“When you have finished your work, I have something important to tell you.

Be not however in haste: I can wait; I shall not be impatient!”

Straightway Alden replied, as he folded the last of his letters,

Pushing his papers aside, and giving respectful attention:

130 “Speak; for whenever you speak, I am always ready to listen,

Always ready to hear whatever pertains to Miles Standish."

Thereupon answered the Captain, embarrassed, and culling his phrases:

" 'Tis not good for a man to be alone, say the Scriptures.

This I have said before, and again and again I repeat it;

135 Every hour in the day, I think it, and feel it, and say it.

Since Rose Standish died, my life has been weary and dreary:

Sick at heart have I been, beyond the healing of friendship.

Oft in my lonely hours have I thought of the maiden Priscilla.

She is alone in the world: her father and mother and brother

140 Died in the winter together; I saw her going and coming,

Now to the grave of the dead, and now to the bed of the dying,

Patient, courageous, and strong, and said to myself, that if ever

There were angels on earth, as there are angels in heaven,

Two have I seen and known; and the angel whose name is Priscilla

145 Holds in my desolate life the place which the other abandoned.

- Long have I cherished the thought, but never have
dared to reveal it,
Being a coward in this, though valiant enough
for the most part.
Go to the damsel Priscilla, the loveliest maiden of
Plymouth,
Say that a blunt old Captain, a man not of words
but of actions,
150 Offers his hand and his heart, the hand and heart
of a soldier.
Not in these words, you know, but this in short
is my meaning:
I am a maker of war, and not a maker of phrases.
You, who are bred as a scholar, can say it in ele-
gant language,
Such as you read in your books of the pleadings
and wooings of lovers,
155 Such as you think best adapted to win the heart
of a maiden."

- When he had spoken, John Alden, the fair-
haired, taciturn stripling,
All aghast at his words, surprised, embarrassed,
bewildered,
Trying to mask his dismay by treating the subject
with lightness,
Trying to smile, and yet feeling his heart stand
still in his bosom,
160 Just as a timepiece stops in a house that is stricken
by lightning,

Thus made answer and spake, or rather stammered
than answered :

“Such a message as that, I am sure I should mangle
and mar it ;

If you would have it well done, — I am only re-
peating your maxim, —

You must do it yourself, you must not leave it
to others !”

165 But with the air of a man whom nothing can turn
from his purpose,

Gravely shaking his head, made answer the Cap-
tain of Plymouth :

“Truly the maxim is good, and I do not mean to
gainsay it ;

But we must use it discreetly, and not waste
powder for nothing.

Now, as I said before, I was never a maker of
phrases.

170 I can march up to a fortress and summon the place
to surrender,

But march up to a woman with such a proposal,
I dare not.

I'm not afraid of bullets, nor shot from the mouth
of a cannon,

But of a thundering ‘No!’ point-blank from the
mouth of a woman,

That I confess I'm afraid of, nor am I ashamed
to confess it !

175 So you must grant my request. for you are an
elegant scholar,

Having the graces of speech, and skill in the turning of phrases."

Taking the hand of his friend, who still was reluctant and doubtful,

Holding it long in his own, and pressing it kindly, he added :

"Though I have spoken thus lightly, yet deep is the feeling that prompts me :

180 Surely you cannot refuse what I ask in the name of our friendship!"

Then made answer John Alden : "The name of friendship is sacred :

What you demand in that name, I have not the power to deny you!"

So the strong will prevailed, subduing and moulding the gentler,

Friendship prevailed over love, and Alden went on his errand.

III.

THE LOVER'S ERRAND.

185 So the strong will prevailed, and Alden went on his errand.

Out of the street of the village, and into the paths of the forest,

Into the tranquil woods, where bluebirds and robins were building

Towns in the populous trees, with hanging gardens of verdure,

Peaceful, aerial cities of joy and affection and freedom.

190 All around him was calm, but within him commotion and conflict,

Love contending with friendship, and self with each generous impulse.

To and fro in his breast his thoughts were heaving and dashing,

As in a foundering ship, with every roll of the vessel,

Washes the bitter sea, the merciless surge of the ocean!

195 "Must I relinquish it all," he cried with a wild lamentation, —

"Must I relinquish it all, the joy, the hope, the illusion?

Was it for this I have loved, and waited, and worshipped in silence?

Was it for this I have followed the flying feet and the shadow

Over the wintry sea, to the desolate shores of New England?

200 Truly the heart is deceitful, and out of its depths of corruption

Rise, like an exhalation, the misty phantoms of passion;

Angels of light they seem, but are only delusions of Satan.

All is clear to me now; I feel it, I see it distinctly!
This is the hand of the Lord; it is laid upon me
in anger,

205 For I have followed too much the heart's desires
and devices,
Worshipping Astaroth blindly, and impious idols
of Baal.
This is the cross I must bear; the sin and the swift
retribution."

So through the Plymouth woods John Alden
went on his errand;
Crossing the brook at the ford, where it brawled
over pebble and shallow,
210 Gathering still, as he went, the Mayflowers bloom-
ing around him,
Fragrant, filling the air with a strange and won-
derful sweetness,
Children lost in the woods, and covered with leaves
in their slumber.
"Puritan flowers," he said, "and the type of Puri-
tan maidens,
Modest and simple and sweet, the very type of
Priscilla!
215 So I will take them to her; to Priscilla the May-
flower of Plymouth.
Modest and simple and sweet, as a parting gift
will I take them:
Breathing their silent farewells, as they fade and
wither and perish,
Soon to be thrown away as is the heart of the
giver."
So through the Plymouth woods John Alden went
on his errand;

- 220 Came to an open space, and saw the disk of the
ocean,
Sailless, sombre and cold with the comfortless
breath of the east-wind;
Saw the new-built house, and people at work in
a meadow;
Heard, as he drew near the door, the musical
voice of Priscilla
Singing the hundredth Psalm, the grand old Puri-
tan anthem,
225 Music that Luther sang to the sacred words of the
Psalmist,
Full of the breath of the Lord, consoling and com-
forting many.
Then, as he opened the door, he beheld the form
of the maiden
Seated beside her wheel, and the carded wool like
a snow-drift
Piled at her knee, her white hands feeding the
ravenous spindle,
230 While with her foot on the treadle she guided the
wheel in its motion.
Open wide on her lap lay the well-worn psalm-
book of Ainsworth,
Printed in Amsterdam, the words and the music
together,
Rough-hewn, angular notes, like stones in the wall
of a churchyard,
Darkened and overhung by the running vine of the
verses.

- 235 Such was the book from whose pages she sang the
old Puritan anthem,
She, the Puritan girl, in the solitude of the forest,
Making the humble house and the modest apparel
of homespun
Beautiful with her beauty, and rich with the
wealth of her being!
Over him rushed, like a wind that is keen and cold
and relentless,
240 Thoughts of what might have been, and the weight
and woe of his errand;
All the dreams that had faded, and all the hopes
that had vanished,
All his life henceforth a dreary and tenantless
mansion,
Haunted by vain regrets, and pallid, sorrowful
faces.
Still he said to himself, and almost fiercely he said
it,
245 "Let not him that putteth his hand to the plough
look backwards;
Though the ploughshare cut through the flowers
of life to its fountains,
Though it pass o'er the graves of the dead and the
hearths of the living,
It is the will of the Lord; and his mercy endureth
forever!"

So he entered the house; and the hum of the
wheel and the singing

- 250 Suddenly ceased ; for Priscilla, aroused by his step
on the threshold,
Rose as he entered and gave him her hand, in
signal of welcome,
Saying, "I knew it was you, when I heard your
step in the passage ;
For I was thinking of you, as I sat there singing
and spinning."
Awkward and dumb with delight, that a thought
of him had been mingled
255 Thus in the sacred psalm, that came from the
heart of the maiden.
Silent before her he stood, and gave her the flowers
for an answer,
Finding no words for his thought. He remem-
bered that day in the winter,
After the first great snow, when he broke a path
from the village.
Reeling and plunging along through the drifts
that encumbered the doorway,
260 Stamping the snow from his feet as he entered
the house, and Priscilla
Laughed at his snowy locks, and gave him a seat
by the fireside,
Grateful and pleased to know he had thought of
her in the snow-storm.
Had he but spoken then ! perhaps not in vain
had he spoken ;
Now it was all too late ; the golden moment had
vanished !

265 So he stood there abashed, and gave her the flowers
for an answer.

Then they sat down and talked of the birds and
the beautiful Spring-time :

Talked of their friends at home, and the May-
flower that sailed on the morrow.

“I have been thinking all day,” said gently the
Puritan maiden,

“Dreaming all night, and thinking all day, of the
hedge-rows of England, —

270 They are in blossom now, and the country is all
like a garden :

Thinking of lanes and fields, and the song of the
lark and the linnet,

Seeing the village street, and familiar faces of
neighbors

Going about as of old, and stopping to gossip
together,

And, at the end of the street, the village church,
with the ivy

275 Climbing the old gray tower, and the quiet graves
in the churchyard.

Kind are the people I live with, and dear to me
my religion ;

Still my heart is so sad, that I wish myself back
in Old England.

You will say it is wrong, but I cannot help it : I
almost

Wish myself back in Old England, I feel so lonely
and wretched.”

280 Thereupon answered the youth: "Indeed I do
 not condemn you;
Stouter hearts than a woman's have quailed in
 this terrible winter.
Yours is tender and trusting, and needs a stronger
 to lean on;
So I have come to you now, with an offer and
 proffer of marriage
Made by a good man and true, Miles Standish the
 Captain of Plymouth!"

285 Thus he delivered his message, the dexterous
 writer of letters, —
Did not embellish the theme, nor array it in
 beautiful phrases,
But came straight to the point, and blurted it out
 like a school-boy;
Even the Captain himself could hardly have said
 it more bluntly.
Mute with amazement and sorrow, Priscilla the
 Puritan maiden
290 Looked into Alden's face, her eyes dilated with
 wonder,
Feeling his words like a blow, that stunned her
 and rendered her speechless;
Till at length she exclaimed, interrupting the
 ominous silence:
"If the great Captain of Plymouth is so very
 eager to wed me,
Why does he not come himself, and take the
 trouble to woo me?"

295 If I am not worth the wooing, I surely am not
worth the winning!"

Then John Alden began explaining and smoothing
the matter,

Making it worse as he went, by saying the Captain
was busy, —

Had no time for such things; — such things! the
words grating harshly

Fell on the ear of Priscilla; and swift as a flash
she made answer:

300 "Has he no time for such things, as you call it,
before he is married,

Would he be likely to find it, or make it, after the
wedding?

That is the way with you men; you don't under-
stand us, you cannot.

When you have made up your minds, after think-
ing of this one and that one,

Choosing, selecting, rejecting, comparing one with
another,

305 Then you make known your desire, with abrupt
and sudden avowal,

And are offended and hurt, and indignant per-
haps, that a woman

Does not respond at once to a love that she never
suspected,

Does not attain at a bound the height to which
you have been climbing.

This is not right nor just; for surely a woman's
affection

310 Is not a thing to be asked for, and had for only
the asking.

When one is truly in love, one not only says it,
but shows it.

Had he but waited awhile, had he only showed
that he loved me,

Even this Captain of yours — who knows? — at
last might have won me,

Old and rough as he is; but now it never can
happen."

315 Still John Alden went on, unheeding the words
of Priscilla,

Urging the suit of his friend, explaining, persuad-
ing, expanding:

Spoke of his courage and skill, and of all his bat-
tles in Flanders,

How with the people of God he had chosen to
suffer affliction,

How, in return for his zeal, they had made him
Captain of Plymouth;

320 He was a gentleman born, could trace his pedigree
plainly

Back to Hugh Standish of Duxbury Hall, in
Lancashire, England,

Who was the son of Ralph, and the grandson of
Thurston de Standish;

Heir unto vast estates, of which he was basely de-
frauded,

Still bore the family arms, and had for his crest
a cock argent

325 Combed and wattled gules, and all the rest of the
blazon.

He was a man of honor, of noble and generous
nature :

Though he was rough, he was kindly ; she knew
how during the winter

He had attended the sick, with a hand as gentle
as woman's :

Somewhat hasty and hot, he could not deny it,
and headstrong.

330 Stern as a soldier might be, but hearty, and pla-
cable always,

Not to be laughed at and scorned, because he was
little of stature :

For he was great of heart, magnanimous, courtly,
courageous :

Any woman in Plymouth, nay, any woman in
England,

Might be happy and proud to be called the wife
of Miles Standish !

335 But as he warmed and glowed, in his simple
and eloquent language,

Quite forgetful of self, and full of the praise of
his rival,

Archly the maiden smiled, and, with eyes over-
running with laughter,

Said, in a tremulous voice, "Why don't you speak
for yourself, John?"

IV.

JOHN ALDEN.

Into the open air John Alden, perplexed and
bewildered,
340 Rushed like a man insane, and wandered alone
by the sea-side;
Paced up and down the sands, and bared his head
to the east-wind,
Cooling his heated brow, and the fire and fever
within him.
Slowly, as out of the heavens, with apocalyptic
splendors,
Sank the City of God, in the vision of John the
Apostle,
345 So, with its cloudy walls of chrysolite, jasper, and
sapphire,
Sank the broad red sun, and over its turrets up-
lifted
Glimmered the golden reed of the angel who meas-
ured the city.

“Welcome, O wind of the East!” he exclaimed
in his wild exultation,

“Welcome, O wind of the East, from the caves
of the misty Atlantic!

350 Blowing o’er fields of dulse, and measureless
meadows of sea-grass,
Blowing o’er rocky wastes, and the grottos and
gardens of ocean!

Lay thy cold, moist hand on my burning forehead,
and wrap me
Close in thy garments of mist, to allay the fever
within me!"

Like an awakened conscience, the sea was moan-
ing and tossing,

355 Beating remorseful and loud the mutable sands
of the sea-shore.

Fierce in his soul was the struggle and tumult of
passions contending;

Love triumphant and crowned, and friendship
wounded and bleeding,

Passionate cries of desire, and importunate plead-
ings of duty!

"Is it my fault," he said, "that the maiden has
chosen between us?"

360 Is it my fault that he failed, — my fault that I
am the victor?"

Then within him there thundered a voice, like the
voice of the Prophet:

"It hath displeased the Lord!" — and he thought
of David's transgression,

Bathsheba's beautiful face, and his friend in the
front of the battle!

Shame and confusion of guilt, and abasement and
self-condemnation,

365 Overwhelmed him at once; and he cried in the
deepest contrition:

"It hath displeased the Lord! It is the tempta-
tion of Satan!"

Then, uplifting his head, he looked at the sea,
and beheld there
Dimly the shadowy form of the Mayflower riding
at anchor,
Rocked on the rising tide, and ready to sail on
the morrow;
370 Heard the voices of men through the mist, the
rattle of cordage
Thrown on the deck, the shouts of the mate, and
the sailors' "Ay, ay, Sir!"
Clear and distinct, but not loud, in the dripping
air of the twilight.
Still for a moment he stood, and listened, and
stared at the vessel,
Then went hurriedly on, as one who, seeing a
phantom,
375 Stops, then quickens his pace, and follows the
beckoning shadow.
"Yes, it is plain to me now," he murmured; "the
hand of the Lord is
Leading me out of the land of darkness, the bond-
age of error,
Through the sea, that shall lift the walls of its
waters around me,
Hiding me, cutting me off, from the cruel thoughts
that pursue me.
380 Back will I go o'er the ocean, this dreary land
will abandon,
Her whom I may not love, and him whom my
heart has offended.

Better to be in my grave in the green old church-
yard in England,

Close by my mother's side, and among the dust
of my kindred :

Better be dead and forgotten, than living in shame
and dishonor !

385 Sacred and safe and unseen, in the dark of the
narrow chamber,

With me my secret shall lie, like a buried jewel
that glimmers

Bright on the hand that is dust, in the chambers
of silence and darkness, —

Yes, as the marriage ring of the great espousal
hereafter !”

Thus as he spake, he turned, in the strength of
his strong resolution,

390 Leaving behind him the shore, and hurried along
in the twilight,

Through the congenial gloom of the forest silent
and sombre,

Till he beheld the lights in the seven houses of
Plymouth,

Shining like seven stars in the dusk and mist of
the evening.

Soon he entered his door, and found the redoubt-
able Captain

395 Sitting alone, and absorbed in the martial pages
of Cæsar,

Fighting some great campaign in Hainault or
Brabant or Flanders.

“Long have you been on your errand,” he said
with a cheery demeanor,

Even as one who is waiting an answer, and fears
not the issue.

“Not far off is the house, although the woods are
between us ;

400 But you have lingered so long, that while you
were going and coming

I have fought ten battles and sacked and demol-
ished a city.

Come, sit down, and in order relate to me all
that has happened.”

Then John Alden spake, and related the won-
drous adventure

From beginning to end, minutely, just as it hap-
pened ;

405 How he had seen Priscilla, and how he had sped
in his courtship,

Only smoothing a little, and softening down her
refusal.

But when he came at length to the words Priscilla
had spoken,

Words so tender and cruel, “Why don’t you speak
for yourself, John?”

Up leaped the Captain of Plymouth, and stamped
on the floor, till his armor

410 Clanged on the wall, where it hung, with a sound
of sinister omen.

All his pent-up wrath burst forth in a sudden
explosion,

E'en as a hand-grenade, that scatters destruction
around it.

Wildly he shouted, and loud: "John Alden! you
have betrayed me!

Me, Miles Standish, your friend! have supplanted,
defrauded, betrayed me!

415 One of my-ancestors ran his sword through the
heart of Wat Tyler;

Who shall prevent me from running my own
through the heart of a traitor?

Yours is the greater treason, for yours is a treason
to friendship!

You, who lived under my roof, whom I cherished
and loved as a brother;

You, who have fed at my board, and drunk at my
cup, to whose keeping

420 I have intrusted my honor, my thought the most
sacred and secret,—

You too, Brutus! ah, woe to the name of friend-
ship hereafter!

Brutus was Cæsar's friend, and you were mine,
but henceforward

Let there be nothing between us save war, and
implacable hatred!"

So spake the Captain of Plymouth, and strode
about in the chamber.

425 Chafing and choking with rage; like cords were
the veins on his temples.

But in the midst of his anger a man appeared at
the doorway,

Bringing in uttermost haste a message of urgent
importance,

Rumors of danger and war and hostile incursions
of Indians!

Straightway the Captain paused, and, without
further question or parley,

430 Took from the nail on the wall his sword with
its scabbard of iron,

Buckled the belt round his waist, and, frowning
fiercely, departed.

Alden was left alone. He heard the clank of the
scabbard

Growing fainter and fainter, and dying away in
the distance.

Then he arose from his seat, and looked forth into
the darkness.

435 Felt the cool air blow on his cheek, that was hot
with the insult,

Lifted his eyes to the heavens, and, folding his
hands as in childhood,

Prayed in the silence of night to the Father who
seeth in secret.

Meanwhile the choleric Captain strode wrathful
away to the council,

Found it already assembled, impatiently waiting
his coming;

440 Men in the middle of life, austere and grave in
deportment,

Only one of them old, the hill that was nearest
to heaven,

Covered with snow, but erect, the excellent Elder
of Plymouth.

God had sifted three kingdoms to find the wheat
for this planting,

Then had sifted the wheat, as the living seed of
a nation;

445 So say the chronicles old, and such is the faith of
the people!

Near them was standing an Indian, in attitude
stern and defiant,

Naked down to the waist, and grim and ferocious
in aspect;

While on the table before them was lying un-
opened a Bible,

Ponderous, bound in leather, brass-studded,
printed in Holland,

450 And beside it outstretched the skin of a rattlesnake
glittered,

Filled, like a quiver, with arrows: a signal and
challenge of warfare.

Brought by the Indian, and speaking with arrowy
tongues of defiance.

This Miles Standish beheld, as he entered, and
heard them debating

What were an answer befitting the hostile message
and menace,

455 Talking of this and of that, contriving, suggesting,
objecting;

One voice only for peace, and that the voice of
the Elder,

Judging it wise and well that some at least were
converted,

Rather than any were slain, for this was but
Christian behavior!

Then out spake Miles Standish, the stalwart Cap-
tain of Plymouth,

460 Muttering deep in his throat, for his voice was
husky with anger,

“What! do you mean to make war with milk and
the water of roses?

Is it to shoot red squirrels you have your howitzer
planted

There on the roof of the church, or is it to shoot
red devils?

Truly the only tongue that is understood by a
savage

465 Must be the tongue of fire that speaks from the
mouth of the cannon!”

Thereupon answered and said the excellent Elder
of Plymouth,

Somewhat amazed and alarmed at this irreverent
language:

“Not so thought Saint Paul, nor yet the other
Apostles;

Not from the cannon’s mouth were the tongues of
fire they spake with!”

470 But unheeded fell this mild rebuke on the Cap-
tain,

Who had advanced to the table, and thus con-
tinued discoursing:

“Leave this matter to me, for to me by right it pertaineth.

War is a terrible trade; but in the cause that is righteous,

Sweet is the smell of powder; and thus I answer the challenge!”

475 Then from the rattlesnake’s skin, with a sudden, contemptuous gesture,

Jerking the Indian arrows, he filled it with powder and bullets

Full to the very jaws, and handed it back to the savage,

Saying, in thundering tones: “Here, take it! this is your answer!”

Silently out of the room then glided the glistening savage,

480 Bearing the serpent’s skin, and seeming himself like a serpent,

Winding his sinuous way in the dark to the depths of the forest.

V.

THE SAILING OF THE MAYFLOWER.

Just in the gray of the dawn, as the mists uprose from the meadows,

There was a stir and a sound in the slumbering village of Plymouth;

Clanging and clicking of arms, and the order imperative, “Forward!”

485 Given in tone suppressed, a tramp of feet, and
then silence.

Figures ten, in the mist, marched slowly out of
the village.

Standish the stalwart it was, with eight of his
valorous army,

Led by their Indian guide, by Hobomok, friend
of the white men.

Northward marching to quell the sudden revolt
of the savage.

490 Giants they seemed in the mist, or the mighty
men of King David;

Giants in heart they were, who believed in God
and the Bible,—

Ay, who believed in the smiting of Midianites and
Philistines.

Over them gleamed far off the crimson banners of
morning;

Under them loud on the sands, the serried billows,
advancing,

495 Fired along the line, and in regular order re-
treated.

Many a mile had they marched, when at length
the village of Plymouth

Woke from its sleep, and arose, intent on its
manifold labors.

Sweet was the air and soft; and slowly the smoke
from the chimneys

Rose over roofs of thatch, and pointed steadily
eastward;

- 500 Men came forth from the doors, and paused and
talked of the weather,
Said that the wind had changed, and was blowing
fair for the Mayflower;
Talked of their Captain's departure, and all the
dangers that menaced,
He being gone, the town, and what should be
done in his absence.
Merrily sang the birds, and the tender voices of
women
- 505 Consecrated with hymns the common cares of the
household.
Out of the sea rose the sun, and the billows re-
joiced at his coming;
Beautiful were his feet on the purple tops of the
mountains;
Beautiful on the sails of the Mayflower riding at
anchor,
Battered and blackened and worn by all the storms
of the winter.
- 510 Loosely against her masts was hanging and flap-
ping her canvas,
Rent by so many gales, and patched by the hands
of the sailors.
Suddenly from her side, as the sun rose over the
ocean,
Darted a puff of smoke, and floated seaward: anon
rang
Loud over field and forest the canon's roar, and
the echoes

515 Heard and repeated the sound, the signal-gun of
departure!
Ah! but with louder echoes replied the hearts of
the people!
Meekly, in voices subdued, the chapter was read
from the Bible,
Meekly the prayer was begun, but ended in fervent
entreaty!
Then from their houses in haste came forth the
Pilgrims of Plymouth,
520 Men and women and children, all hurrying down
to the sea-shore,
Eager, with tearful eyes, to say farewell to the
Mayflower,
Homeward bound o'er the sea, and leaving them
here in the desert.

Foremost among them was Alden. All night
he had lain without slumber,
Turning and tossing about in the heat and unrest
of his fever.
525 He had beheld Miles Standish, who came back
late from the council,
Stalking into the room, and heard him mutter
and murmur,
Sometimes it seemed a prayer, and sometimes it
sounded like swearing.
Once he had come to the bed, and stood there a
moment in silence;
Then he had turned away, and said: "I will not
awake him;

530 Let him sleep on, it is best; for what is the use
of more talking!"

Then he extinguished the light, and threw himself
down on his pallet,

Dressed as he was, and ready to start at the break
of the morning, —

Covered himself with the cloak he had worn in
his campaigns in Flanders, —

Slept as a soldier sleeps in his bivouac, ready for
action.

535 But with the dawn he arose; in the twilight Alden
beheld him

Put on his corselet of steel, and all the rest of his
armor,

Buckle about his waist his trusty blade of Da-
mascus,

Take from the corner his musket, and so stride out
of the chamber.

Often the heart of the youth had burned and
yearned to embrace him,

540 Often his lips had essayed to speak, imploring for
pardon;

All the old friendship came back with its tender
and grateful emotions;

But his pride overmastered the nobler nature
within him, —

Pride, and the sense of his wrong, and the burning
fire of the insult.

So he beheld his friend departing in anger, but
spoke not,

545 Saw him go forth to danger, perhaps to death, and
he spake not!

Then he arose from his bed, and heard what the
people were saying,

Joined in the talk at the door, with Stephen and
Richard and Gilbert,

Joined in the morning prayer, and in the reading
of Scripture.

And, with the others, in haste went hurrying
down to the sea-shore,

550 Down to the Plymouth Rock, that had been to
their feet as a doorstep

Into a world unknown, — the corner-stone of a
nation!

There with his boat was the Master, already a
little impatient

Lest he should lose the tide, or the wind might
shift to the eastward,

Square-built, hearty, and strong, with an odor of
ocean about him.

555 Speaking with this one and that, and cramming
letters and parcels

Into his pockets capacious, and messages mingled
together

Into his narrow brain, till at last he was wholly
bewildered.

Nearer the boat stood Alden, with one foot placed
on the gunwale,

One still firm on the rock, and talking at times
with the sailors,

560 Seated erect on the thwarts, all ready and eager
for starting.

He too was eager to go, and thus put an end to
his anguish,

Thinking to fly from despair, that swifter than
keel is or canvas,

Thinking to drown in the sea the ghost that would
rise and pursue him.

But as he gazed on the crowd, he beheld the form
of Priscilla

565 Standing dejected among them, unconscious of all
that was passing.

Fixed were her eyes upon his, as if she divined
his intention,

Fixed with a look so sad, so reproachful, implor-
ing, and patient,

That with a sudden revulsion his heart recoiled
from its purpose,

As from the verge of a crag, where one step more
is destruction.

570 Strange is the heart of man, with its quick, mys-
terious instincts!

Strange is the life of man, and fatal or fated are
moments,

Whereupon turn, as on hinges, the gates of the
wall adamantine!

“Here I remain!” he exclaimed, as he looked at
the heavens above him,

Thanking the Lord whose breath had scattered the
mist and the madness,

575 Wherein, blind and lost, to death he was staggering
 headlong.

“Yonder snow-white cloud, that floats in the ether
 above me,

Seems like a hand that is pointing and beckoning
 over the ocean.

There is another hand, that is not so spectral and
 ghost-like,

Holding me, drawing me back, and clasping mine
 for protection.

580 Float, O hand of cloud, and vanish away in the
 ether! ~

Roll thyself up like a fist, to threaten and daunt
 me; I heed not

Either your warning or menace, or any omen of
 evil!

There is no land so sacred, no air so pure and so
 wholesome,

As is the air she breathes, and the soil that is
 pressed by her footsteps.

585 Here for her sake will I stay, and like an invisible
 presence

Hover around her forever, protecting, supporting
 her weakness;

Yes! as my foot was the first that stepped on this
 rock at the landing,

So, with the blessing of God, shall it be the last
 at the leaving!”

Meanwhile the Master alert, but with dignified
 air and important,

- 590 Scanning with watchful eye the tide and the wind
and the weather,
Walked about on the sands, and the people
crowded around him
Saying a few last words, and enforcing his careful remembrance.
Then, taking each by the hand, as if he were
grasping a tiller,
Into the boat he sprang, and in haste shoved off
to his vessel,
595 Glad in his heart to get rid of all this worry and
flurry,
Glad to be gone from a land of sand and sickness
and sorrow,
Short allowance of victual, and plenty of nothing
but Gospel!
Lost in the sound of the oars was the last farewell
of the Pilgrims.
O strong hearts and true! not one went back in
the Mayflower!
600 No, not one looked back, who had set his hand to
this ploughing!

Soon were heard on board the shouts and songs
of the sailors
Heaving the windlass round, and hoisting the
ponderous anchor.
Then the yards were braced, and all sails set to the
west-wind,
Blowing steady and strong: and the Mayflower
sailed from the harbor,

605 Rounded the point of the Gurnet, and leaving far
to the southward
Island and cape of sand, and the Field of the
First Encounter,
Took the wind on her quarter, and stood for the
open Atlantic,
Borne on the send of the sea, and the swelling
hearts of the Pilgrims.

Long in silence they watched the receding sail
of the vessel,
610 Much endeared to them all, as something living
and human :
Then, as if filled with the spirit, and wrapt in a
vision prophetic,
Baring his hoary head, the excellent Elder of
Plymouth
Said, "Let us pray !" and they prayed, and thanked
the Lord and took courage.
Mournfully sobbed the waves at the base of the
rock, and above them
615 Bowed and whispered the wheat on the hill of
death, and their kindred
Seemed to awake in their graves, and to join in
the prayer that they uttered.
Sun-illuminated and white, on the eastern verge of
the ocean
Gleamed the departing sail, like a marble slab in
a graveyard ;
Buried beneath it lay forever all hope of escaping.

620 Lo! as they turned to depart, they saw the form
of an Indian.

Watching them from the hill: but while they
spake with each other,

Pointing with outstretched hands, and saying,
"Look!" he had vanished.

So they returned to their homes: but Alden lingered a little,

Musing alone on the shore, and watching the wash
of the billows

625 Round the base of the rock, and the sparkle and
flash of the sunshine,

Like the spirit of God, moving visibly over the
waters.

VI.

PRISCILLA.

Thus for a while he stood, and mused by the
shore of the ocean,

Thinking of many things, and most of all of
Priscilla;

And as if thought had the power to draw to itself,
like the loadstone,

630 Whatsoever it touches, by subtile laws of its nature,

Lo! as he turned to depart, Priscilla was standing
beside him.

"Are you so much offended, you will not speak
to me?" said she.

“Am I so much to blame, that yesterday, when
you were pleading
Warmly the cause of another, my heart, impulsive
and wayward,
635 Pledged your own, and spake out, forgetful per-
haps of decorum?
Certainly you can forgive me for speaking so
frankly, for saying
What I ought not to have said, yet now I can
never unsay it;
For there are moments in life, when the heart is
so full of emotion,
That if by chance it be shaken, or into its depths
like a pebble
640 Drops some careless word, it overflows, and its
secret,
Spilt on the ground like water, can never be
gathered together.
Yesterday I was shocked, when I heard you speak
of Miles Standish,
Praising his virtues, transforming his very de-
fects into virtues,
Praising his courage and strength, and even his
fighting in Flanders,
645 As if by fighting alone you could win the heart
of a woman,
Quite overlooking yourself and the rest, in exalt-
ing your hero.
Therefore I spake as I did, by an irresistible
impulse.

You will forgive me, I hope, for the sake of the
friendship between us,
Which is too true and too sacred to be so easily
broken!"

650 Thereupon answered John Alden, the scholar, the
friend of Miles Standish:

"I was not angry with you, with myself alone I
was angry,
Seeing how badly I managed the matter I had in
my keeping."

"No!" interrupted the maiden, with answer
prompt and decisive:

"No; you were angry with me, for speaking so
frankly and freely.

655 It was wrong, I acknowledge; for it is the fate
of a woman

Long to be patient and silent, to wait like a ghost
that is speechless,

Till some questioning voice dissolves the spell of
its silence.

Hence is the inner life of so many suffering women
Sunless and silent and deep, like subterranean
rivers

660 Running through caverns of darkness, unheard,
unseen, and unfruitful,

Chafing their channels of stone, with endless and
profitless murmurs."

Thereupon answered John Alden, the young man,
the lover of women:

"Heaven forbid it, Priscilla: and truly they seem
to me always

- More like the beautiful rivers that watered the
garden of Eden,
665 More like the river Euphrates, through deserts of
Havilah flowing,
Filling the land with delight, and memories sweet
of the garden!"
- "Ah, by these words, I can see," again inter-
rupted the maiden,
"How very little you prize me, or care for what
I am saying.
- When from the depths of my heart, in pain and
with secret misgiving,
670 Frankly I speak to you, asking for sympathy only
and kindness,
Straightway you take up my words, that are plain
and direct and in earnest,
Turn them away from their meaning, and answer
with flattering phrases.
- This is not right, is not just, is not true to the
best that is in you;
For I know and esteem you, and feel that your
nature is noble,
- 675 Lifting mine up to a higher, a more ethereal level.
Therefore I value your friendship, and feel it
perhaps the more keenly
If you say aught that implies I am only as one
among many,
If you make use of those common and compli-
mentary phrases
Most men think so fine, in dealing and speaking
with women,

680 But which women reject as insipid, if not as
insulting."

Mute and amazed was Alden; and listened and
looked at Priscilla,

Thinking he never had seen her more fair, more
divine in her beauty.

He who but yesterday pleaded so glibly the cause
of another,

Stood there embarrassed and silent, and seeking in
vain for an answer.

685 So the maiden went on, and little divined or im-
agined

What was at work in his heart, that made him so
awkward and speechless.

"Let us, then, be what we are, and speak what
we think, and in all things

Keep ourselves loyal to truth, and the sacred
professions of friendship.

It is no secret I tell you, nor am I ashamed to
declare it:

690 I have liked to be with you, to see you, to speak
with you always.

So I was hurt at your words, and a little affronted
to hear you

Urge me to marry your friend, though he were
the Captain Miles Standish.

For I must tell you the truth: much more to me
is your friendship

Than all the love he could give, were he twice the
hero you think him."

695 Then she extended her hand, and Alden, who
eagerly grasped it,
Felt all the wounds in his heart, that were aching
and bleeding so sorely,
Healed by the touch of that hand, and he said
with a voice full of feeling:
“Yes, we must ever be friends; and of all who
offer you friendship
Let me be ever the first, the truest, the nearest
and dearest!”

700 Casting a farewell look at the glimmering sail
of the Mayflower
Distant, but still in sight, and sinking below the
horizon,
Homeward together they walked, with a strange,
indefinite feeling,
That all the rest had departed and left them alone
in the desert.
But, as they went through the fields in the blessing
and smile of the sunshine,
705 Lighter grew their hearts, and Priscilla said very
archly:
“Now that our terrible Captain has gone in pur-
suit of the Indians,
Where he is happier far than he would be com-
manding a household,
You may speak boldly, and tell me of all that
happened between you,
When you returned last night, and said how un-
grateful you found me.”

- 710 Thereupon answered John Alden, and told her the
whole of the story, —
Told her his own despair, and the direful wrath
of Miles Standish.
Whereat the maiden smiled, and said between
laughing and earnest,
“He is a little chimney, and heated hot in a
moment!”
But as he gently rebuked her, and told her how he
had suffered, —
715 How he had even determined to sail that day in
the Mayflower,
And had remained for her sake, on hearing the
dangers that threatened, —
All her manner was changed, and she said with a
faltering accent,
“Truly I thank you for this: how good you have
been to me always!”

Thus, as a pilgrim devout, who toward Jerusa-
lem journeys,

- 720 Taking three steps in advance, and one reluctantly
backward,
Urged by importunate zeal, and withheld by pangs
of contrition;
Slowly but steadily onward, receding yet ever ad-
vancing,
Journeyed this Puritan youth to the Holy Land
of his longings,
Urged by the fervor of love, and withheld by re-
morseful misgivings.

VII.

THE MARCH OF MILES STANDISH.

- 725 Meanwhile the stalwart Miles Standish was march-
ing steadily northward,
Winding through forest and swamp, and along
the trend of the sea-shore,
All day long, with hardly a halt, the fire of his
anger
Burning and crackling within, and the sulphurous
odor of powder
Seeming more sweet to his nostrils than all the
scents of the forest.
- 170 Silent and moody he went, and much he revolved
his discomfort;
He who was used to success, and to easy victories
always,
Thus to be flouted, rejected, and laughed to scorn
by a maiden,
Thus to be mocked and betrayed by the friend
whom most he had trusted!
Ah! 'twas too much to be borne, and he fretted
and chafed in his armor!
- 135 "I alone am to blame," he muttered, "for mine
was the folly.
What has a rough old soldier, grown grim and
gray in the harness,
Used to the camp and its ways, to do with the
wooing of maidens?

'T was but a dream, — let it pass, — let it vanish
like so many others!

What I thought was a flower, is only a weed, and
is worthless:

740 Out of my heart will I pluck it, and throw it
away, and henceforward

Be but a fighter of battles, a lover and wooer of
dangers."

Thus he revolved in his mind his sorry defeat and
discomfort,

While he was marching by day or lying at night
in the forest,

Looking up at the trees and the constellations be-
yond them.

745 After a three days' march he came to an Indian
encampment

Pitched on the edge of a meadow, between the
sea and the forest;

Women at work by the tents, and warriors, horrid
with war-paint,

Seated about a fire, and smoking and talking to-
gether;

Who, when they saw from afar the sudden ap-
proach of the white men,

750 Saw the flash of the sun on breastplate and sabre
and musket,

Straightway leaped to their feet, and two, from
among them advancing,

Came to parley with Standish, and offer him furs
as a present;

Friendship was in their looks, but in their hearts
there was hatred.

Braves of the tribe were these, and brothers, gi-
gantic in stature,

755 Huge as Goliath of Gath, or the terrible Og, king
of Bashan ;

One was Pecksuot named, and the other was
called Wattawamat.

Round their necks were suspended their knives
in scabbards of wampum,

Two-edged, trenchant knives, with points as sharp
as a needle.

Other arms had they none, for they were cunning
and crafty.

760 "Welcome, English !" they said, — these words
they had learned from the traders

Touching at times on the coast, to barter and
chaffer for peltries.

Then in their native tongue they began to parley
with Standish,

Through his guide and interpreter, Hobomok,
friend of the white man,

Begging for blankets and knives, but mostly for
muskets and powder,

765 Kept by the white man, they said, concealed, with
the plague, in his cellars,

Ready to be let loose, and destroy his brother the
red man !

But when Standish refused, and said he would
give them the Bible,

Suddenly changing their tone, they began to boast
and to bluster.

Then Wattawamat advanced with a stride in front
of the other,

770 And, with a lofty demeanor, thus vauntingly spake
to the Captain:

“Now Wattawamat can see, by the fiery eyes of
the Captain,

Angry is he in his heart: but the heart of the
brave Wattawamat

Is not afraid at the sight. He was not born of
a woman,

But on a mountain, at night, from an oak-tree
riven by lightning.

775 Forth he sprang at a bound, with all his weapons
about him,

Shouting, ‘Who is there here to fight with the
brave Wattawamat?’ ”

Then he unsheathed his knife, and, whetting the
blade on his left hand,

Held it aloft and displayed a woman’s face on the
handle,

Saying, with bitter expression and look of sinister
meaning:

780 “I have another at home, with the face of a man
on the handle:

By and by they shall marry: and there will be
plenty of children!”

Then stood Pecksuot forth, self-vaunting, in-
sulting Miles Standish;

While with his fingers he patted the knife that
hung at his bosom,
Drawing it half from its sheath, and plunging it
back, as he muttered,
785 "By and by it shall see; it shall eat; ah, ha! but
shall speak not!
This is the mighty Captain the white men have
sent to destroy us!
He is a little man; let him go and work with the
women!"

Meanwhile Standish had noted the faces and
figures of Indians
Peeping and creeping about from bush to tree in
the forest,
790 Feigning to look for game, with arrows set on
their bow-strings,
Drawing about him still closer and closer the net
of their ambush.
But undaunted he stood, and dissembled and
treated them smoothly;
So the old chronicles say, that were writ in the
days of the fathers.
But when he heard their defiance, the boast, the
taunt and the insult,
795 All the hot blood of his race, of Sir Hugh and
of Thurston de Standish,
Boiled and beat in his heart, and swelled in the
veins of his temples.
Headlong he leaped on the boaster, and, snatch-
ing his knife from its scabbard,

Plunged it into his heart, and, reeling backward,
the savage

Fell with his face to the sky, and a fiendlike fierceness upon it.

800 Straight there arose from the forest the awful
sound of the war-whoop,

And, like a flurry of snow on the whistling wind
of December,

Swift and sudden and keen came a flight of
feathery arrows.

Then came a cloud of smoke, and out of the cloud
came the lightning,

Out of the lightning thunder; and death unseen
ran before it.

805 Frightened the savages fled for shelter in swamp
and in thicket,

Hotly pursued and beset: but their sachem, the
brave Wattawamat,

Fled not: he was dead. Unswerving and swift
had a bullet

Passed through his brain, and he fell with both
hands clutching the greensward,

Seeming in death to hold back from his foe the
land of his fathers.

810 There on the flowers of the meadow the war-
riors lay, and above them,

Silent, with folded arms, stood Hobomok, friend
of the white man.

Smiling at length he exclaimed to the stalwart
Captain of Plymouth:

“Pecksuot bragged very loud, of his courage, his
strength and his stature, —
Mocked the great Captain, and called him a little
man; but I see now
815 Big enough have you been to lay him speechless
before you !”

Thus the first battle was fought and won by the
stalwart Miles Standish.
When the tidings thereof were brought to the vil-
lage of Plymouth,
And as a trophy of war the head of the brave
Wattawamat
Scowled from the roof of the fort, which at once
was a church and a fortress,
820 All who beheld it rejoiced, and praised the Lord,
and took courage.
Only Priscilla averted her face from this spectre
of terror,
Thanking God in her heart that she had not mar-
ried Miles Standish;
Shrinking, fearing almost, lest, coming home from
his battles,
He should lay claim to her hand, as the prize and
reward of his valor.

VIII.

THE SPINNING WHEEL.

835 Month after month passed away, and in' autumn
the ships of the merchants

Came with kindred and friends, with cattle and
corn for the Pilgrims.

All in the village was peace; the men were intent
on their labors,

Busy with hewing and building, with garden-plot
and with merestead,

Busy with breaking the glebe, and mowing the
grass in the meadows,

830 Searching the sea for its fish, and hunting the
deer in the forest.

All in the village was peace; but at times the
rumor of warfare

Filled the air with alarm, and the apprehension
of danger.

Bravely the stalwart Standish was scouring the
land with his forces,

Waxing valiant in fight and defeating the alien
armies,

835 Till his name had become a sound of fear to the
nations.

Anger was still in his heart, but at times the re-
morse and contrition

Which in all noble natures succeed the passionate
outbreak,

Came like a rising tide, that encounters the rush
of a river,

Staying its current awhile, but making it bitter
and brackish.

- 840 Meanwhile Alden at home had built him a new
habitation,

Solid, substantial, of timber rough-hewn from
the firs of the forest.

Wooden-barred was the door, and the roof was
covered with rushes;

Latticed the windows were, and the window-panes
were of paper,

Oiled to admit the light, while wind and rain
were excluded.

845 There too he dug a well, and around it planted an
orchard:

Still may be seen to this day some trace of the well
and the orchard.

Close to the house was the stall, where, safe and
secure from annoyance,

Raghorn, the snow-white bull, that had fallen to
Alden's allotment

In the division of cattle, might ruminate in the
night-time

850 Over the pastures he cropped, made fragrant by
sweet pennyroyal.

Of when his labor was finished, with eager feet
would the dreamer

Follow the pathway that ran through the woods
to the house of Priscilla,

Led by illusions romantic and subtle deceptions
of fancy,

Pleasure disguised as duty, and love in the
semblance of friendship.

855 Ever of her he thought, when he fashioned the
walls of his dwelling;

- Ever of her he thought, when he delved in the
soil of his garden ;
Ever of her he thought, when he read in his Bible
on Sunday
Praise of the virtuous woman, as she is described
in the Proverbs, —
How the heart of her husband doth safely trust
in her always,
860 How all the days of her life she will do him good,
and not evil,
How she seeketh the wool and the flax and work-
eth with gladness,
How she layeth her hand to the spindle and hold-
eth the distaff,
How she is not afraid of the snow for herself or
her household,
Knowing her household are clothed with the
scarlet cloth of her weaving !
865 So as she sat at her wheel one afternoon in the
Autumn,
Alden, who opposite sat, and was watching her
dexterous fingers,
As if the thread she was spinning were that of
his life and his fortune,
After a pause in their talk, thus spake to the sound
of the spindle.
“Truly, Priscilla,” he said, “when I see you spin-
ning and spinning,
870 Never idle a moment, but thrifty and thoughtful
of others,

Suddenly you are transformed, are visibly changed
in a moment:

You are no longer Priscilla, but Bertha the Beautiful Spinner."

Here the light foot on the treadle grew swifter
and swifter; the spindle

Uttered an angry snarl, and the thread snapped
short in her fingers;

375 While the impetuous speaker, not heeding the
mischief, continued:

"You are the beautiful Bertha, the spinner, the
queen of Helvetia;

She whose story I read at a stall in the streets
of Southampton,

Who, as she rode on her palfrey, o'er valley and
meadow and mountain,

Ever was spinning her thread from a distaff fixed
to her saddle.

380 She was so thrifty and good, that her name passed
into a proverb.

So shall it be with your own, when the spinning-
wheel shall no longer

Hum in the house of the farmer, and fill its
chambers with music.

Then shall the mothers, reproving, relate how it
was in their childhood,

Praising the good old times, and the days of
Priscilla the spinner!"

385 Straight uprose from her wheel the beautiful
Puritan maiden,

Pleased with the praise of her thrift from him
whose praise was the sweetest,

Drew from the reel on the table a snowy skein
of her spinning,

Thus making answer, meanwhile, to the flattering
phrases of Alden :

“Come, you must not be idle ; if I am a pattern
for housewives,

893 Show yourself equally worthy of being the model
of husbands.

- Hold this skein on your hands, while I wind it,
ready for knitting ;

Then who knows but hereafter, when fashions have
changed and the manners,

Fathers may talk to their sons of the good old
times of John Alden !”

Thus, with a jest and a laugh, the skein on his
hands she adjusted,

895 He sitting awkwardly there, with his arms ex-
tended before him,

She standing graceful, erect, and winding the
thread from his fingers,

Sometimes cliding a little his clumsy manner of
holding,

Sometimes touching his hands, as she disentangled
expertly

Twist or knot in the yarn, unawares — for how
could she help it ? —

900 Sending electrical thrills through every nerve in
his body.

Lo! in the midst of this scene, a breathless
messenger entered,
Bringing in hurry and heat the terrible news from
the village.

Yes; Miles Standish was dead!—an Indian had
brought them the tidings,—

Slain by a poisoned arrow, shot down in the front
of the battle,

905 Into an ambush beguiled, cut off with the whole
of his forces;

All the town would be burned, and all the people
be murdered!

Such were the tidings of evil that burst on the
hearts of the hearers.

Silent and statue-like stood Priscilla, her face
looking backward

Still at the face of the speaker, her arms uplifted
in horror;

910 But John Alden, upstarting, as if the barb of the
arrow

Piercing the heart of his friend had struck his
own, and had sundered

Once and forever the bonds that held him bound
as a captive,

Wild with excess of sensation, the awful delight
of his freedom,

Mingled with pain and regret, unconscious of what
he was doing,

915 Clasped, almost with a groan, the motionless form
of Priscilla,

Pressing her close to his heart, as forever his own,
and exclaiming:

“Those whom the Lord hath united, let no man
put them asunder!”

Even as rivulets twain, from distant and separate sources,

Seeing each other afar, as they leap from the
rocks, and pursuing

920 Each one its devious path, but drawing nearer
and nearer,

Rush together at last, at their trysting-place in
the forest;

So these lives that had run thus far in separate
channels,

Coming in sight of each other, then swerving and
flowing asunder,

Parted by barriers strong, but drawing nearer and
nearer,

925 Rushed together at last, and one was lost in the
other.

IX.

THE WEDDING DAY.

Forth from the curtain of clouds, from the tent
of purple and scarlet,

Issued the sun, the great High-Priest, in his
garments resplendent,

Holiness unto the Lord, in letters of light, on his
forehead,

Round the hem of his robe the golden bells and
pomegranates.

930 Blessing the world he came, and the bars of vapor
beneath him

Gleamed like a grate of brass, and the sea at his
feet was a laver!

This was the wedding morn of Priscilla the
Puritan maiden.

Friends were assembled together; the Elder and
Magistrate also

Graced the scene with their presence, and stood
like the Law and the Gospel,

935 One with the sanction of earth and one with the
blessing of heaven.

Simple and brief was the wedding as that of Ruth
and of Boaz.

Softly the youth and the maiden repeated the
words of betrothal,

Taking each other for husband and wife in the
Magistrate's presence,

After the Puritan way, and the laudable custom
of Holland.

940 Fervently then and devoutly, the excellent Elder
of Plymouth

Prayed for the hearth and the home, that were
founded that day in affection,

Speaking of life and of death, and imploring
Divine benedictions.

Lo! when the service was ended, a form ap-
peared on the threshold,

Clad in armor of steel, a sombre and sorrowful
figure!

945 Why does the bridegroom start and stare at the
strange apparition?

Why does the bride turn pale, and hide her face
on his shoulder?

Is it a phantom of air,—a bodiless, spectral illu-
sion?

Is it a ghost from the grave, that has come to
forbid the betrothal?

Long had it stood there unseen, a guest uninvited,
unwelcomed;

950 Over its clouded eyes there had passed at times
an expression .

Softening the gloom and revealing the warm heart
hidden beneath them,

As when across the sky the driving rack of the
rain cloud

Grows for a moment thin, and betrays the sun
by its brightness.

Once it had lifted its hand, and moved its lips,
but was silent,

955 As if an iron will had mastered the fleeting inten-
tion.

But when were ended the troth and the prayer
and the last benediction,

Into the room it strode, and the people beheld
with amazement

Bodily there in his armor Miles Standish, the
Captain of Plymouth!

Grasping the bridegroom's hand, he said with
emotion, "Forgive me!

960 I have been angry and hurt,—too long have I
cherished the feeling;

I have been cruel and hard, but now, thank God!
it is ended.

Mine is the same hot blood that leaped in the veins
of Hugh Standish,

Sensitive, swift to resent, but as swift in atoning
for error.

Never so much as now was Miles Standish the
friend of John Alden."

965 Thereupon answered the bridegroom: "Let all be
forgotten between us,—

All save the dear old friendship, and that shall
grow older and dearer!"

Then the Captain advanced, and, bowing, saluted
Priscilla,

Gravely, and after the manner of old-fashioned
gentry in England,

Something of camp and of court, of town and of
country, commingled,

970 Wishing her joy of her wedding, and loudly laud-
ing her husband.

Then he said with a smile: "I should have re-
membered the adage,—

If you would be well served, you must serve your-
self; and moreover,

No man can gather cherries in Kent at the season
of Christmas!"

Great was the people's amazement, and greater
yet their rejoicing,
975 Thus to behold once more the sunburnt face of
their Captain,
Whom they had mourned as dead; and they gathered
and crowded about him,
Eager to see him and hear him, forgetful of bride
and of bridegroom,
Questioning, answering, laughing, and each interrupting
the other,
Till the good Captain declared, being quite over-
powered and bewildered,
980 He had rather by far break into an Indian en-
campment,
Than come again to a wedding to which he had
not been invited.

Meanwhile the bridegroom went forth and stood
with the bride at the doorway,
Breathing the perfumed air of that warm and
beautiful morning.
Touched with autumnal tints, but lonely and sad
in the sunshine,
985 Lay extended before them the land of toil and
privation;
There were the graves of the dead, and the barren
waste of the sea-shore,
There the familiar fields, the groves of pine, and
the meadows:
But to their eyes transfigured, it seemed as the
Garden of Eden,

Filled with the presence of God, whose voice was
the sound of the ocean.

- 990 Soon was their vision disturbed by the noise and
 stir of departure,
 Friends coming forth from the house, and im-
 patient of longer delaying,
 Each with his plan for the day, and the work
 that was left uncompleted.
 Then from a stall near at hand, amid exclamations
 of wonder,
 Alden the thoughtful, the careful, so happy, so
 proud of Priscilla,
995 Brought out his snow-white bull, obeying the hand
 of its master,
 Led by a cord that was tied to an iron ring in its
 nostrils,
 Covered with crimson cloth, and a cushion placed
 for a saddle.
 She should not walk, he said, through the dust
 and heat of the noonday ;
 Nay, she should ride like a queen, not plod along
 like a peasant.
1000 Somewhat alarmed at first, but reassured by the
 others,
 Placing her hand on the cushion, her foot in the
 hand of her husband,
 Gayly, with joyous laugh, Priscilla mounted her
 palfrey.
 “Nothing is wanting now,” he said with a smile,
 “but the distaff;

Then you would be in truth my queen, my beautiful Bertha !”

1005 Onward the bridal procession now moved to
their new habitation,
Happy husband and wife, and friends conversing
together.

Pleasantly murmured the brook, as they crossed
the ford in the forest,

Pleased with the image that passed, like a dream
of love through its bosom,

Tremulous, floating in air, o'er the depths of the
azure abysses.

1010 Down through the golden leaves the sun was pouring
his splendors,

Gleaming on purple grapes, that, from branches
above them suspended,

Mingled their odorous breath with the balm of
the pine and the fir-tree,

Wild and sweet as the clusters that grew in the
valley of Eshcol.

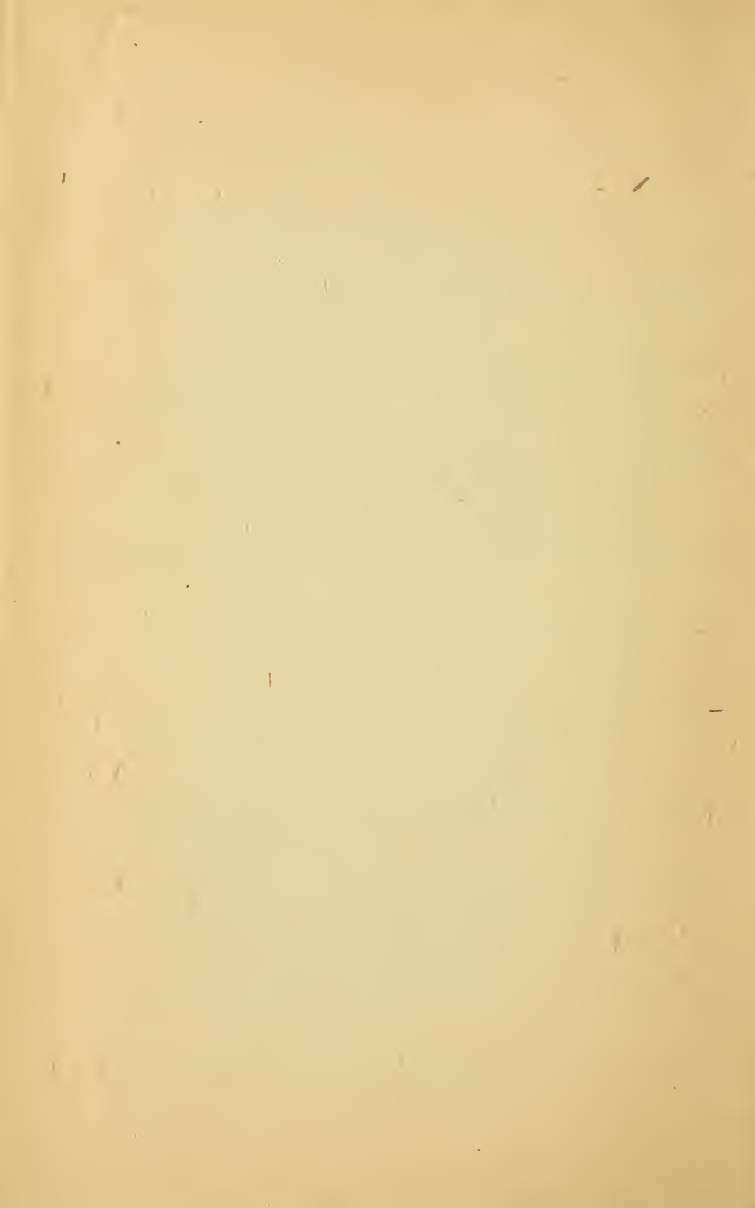
Like a picture it seemed of the primitive, pastoral
ages,

1015 Fresh with the youth of the world, and recalling
Rebecca and Isaac,

Old and yet ever new, and simple and beautiful
always,

Love immortal and young in the endless succession
of lovers.

So through the Plymouth woods passed onward
the bridal procession.



JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

I.

Whittier was born near Haverhill, Massachusetts, December 17, 1807. He sprang from a race of sturdy Quaker farmers, whose men were inured to rough manual labor and whose women added to their household duties patient toil at the wheel or loom. Whittier himself was not of robust frame, and the hardships and exposure he underwent in early life impaired his health for the rest of his days. Yet his contact with mother earth and his knowledge of rural customs were to be of the greatest service to him. That he was not embittered by privations the readers of *Snow-Bound* know.

The family was very loyal to the religious tenets of the Quakers. Indeed, it will go far to explain Whittier if we bear it in mind that he was a Quaker amid Puritan surroundings. His formal education was meagre. He spent a few weeks each year in the district school, the teacher of which "boarded round" with the patrons; and he devoured eagerly the scanty contents of the family library—the Bible, almanacs, religious pamphlets, and lives of the Quaker worthies. Through the kindness of a teacher a copy of Burns came into his hands. It stirred all his slumbering faculties; and from this time,

as he tells us, he began to make rhymes for himself, and to imagine stories and adventures. A sister, without consulting him, forwarded one of his poems to William Lloyd Garrison, then in charge of a local newspaper. So impressed was the editor that he rode out to see the boyish poet, and in their well-known interview he urged an academic training. The elder Whittier, partly from prejudice against literary culture but more from the stringent condition of his finances, gave little encouragement. Whittier resorted, nevertheless, to making shoes and to employment at keeping books, and thus paid his way for two terms at Haverhill Academy. For a number of years after this he was connected with various papers, though returning at intervals to his home that he might recuperate his health or succor the family fortunes. All the while he was turning off verse of a comparatively facile type, much of it dealing with New England legendary lore.

Moreover, he was growing deeply interested in political matters. Shrewd, sympathetic, endowed with unusual skill to foresee the drift of events, he wielded an increasing influence in the affairs of community, section, and nation. He never held, it is true, a higher position than that of representative from his county in the state legislature; his work was of the practical kind that emanates from the power behind the throne. Yet outward recognition, too, in the form of a nomination for Congress lay almost in his grasp, when in 1833 he deliberately chose a course that blasted his political prospects. He joined the aboli-

tion movement. The cause was at that time highly unpopular, even in the North; and its advocates were regarded much as we look upon anarchists today. The whole soul of Whittier was enlisted, however—so much so that during the years in which he should have been most productive he in no wise concentrated his energy for a master effort in literature. There could be no better illustration of his unvarying conviction that the most important thing in his life was his work of reform and not his service of the Muses. Yet he hurled forth stanzas that rang with appeal and denunciation. He also edited a series of abolition papers and became, after a time, a regular contributor to a well-known anti-slavery journal, the *National Era*. Seeing only the awful side of slavery, and because of his outspoken stand suffering the persecutions of the mob, he differed, nevertheless, from the school of Garrison in wishing to get rid of the evil through existing forces and institutions. He realized that on many subjects of a moral nature practical politics may have a bearing. He had this in mind when he exclaimed: "How absurd is moral action apart from political!"

In 1836 he had moved to Amesbury. In this village he lived for forty years, or until he took up his residence with his kinsfolk at Oak Knoll, in Danvers. From poverty, poor health, or a Quaker reluctance to link himself with one outside his own sect, he never married. His most intimate companion was his sister Elizabeth, who died in 1864. From the ties of home and from admiration for the children of rugged toil

he had been too loyal to break away wholly, even during the period when he had been engrossed with the slavery question. With such militant volumes as *Ballads* (1838), *Anti-Slavery Poems* (1838), and *Voices of Freedom* (1841), he mingled the softer strains of *Lays of My Home* (1843) and the peace-loving *Songs of Labor* (1850). During the hostilities between North and South he incited the Union soldiers, whom his religion forbade him to join, to more earnest exertion with an occasional fire-born ballad like *Barbara Frietchie*; and he greeted the outcome of the struggle with the ecstatic and fervent *Laus Deo*. What depths of serenity, of forbearance, and of humble faith lay beneath his animated zeal may be judged from *The Eternal Goodness*, which was written about this time.

With the appearance of *Snow-Bound* in 1866 began the third and, poetically, the most fruitful of the periods of Whittier's life. Public matters still interested him greatly, but no longer usurped all his energy. Moreover, he was no longer on the unpopular side of great questions, and people had learned to admire the sturdy courage he had shown. Literary recognition was freely accorded. The publication of *Snow-Bound* freed him from financial vexation, and he now had leisure for the reading he had so long neglected, as well as for the cultivation of poetry that was not merely the servant of ulterior aims. In 1867 appeared *The Tent on the Beach*, two years later *Among the Hills*, and in 1870 the *Ballads of New England*. The life of the old poet continued

until September 7, 1892—its eighty-fifth year. Among Whittier's last words were: "Love—love to all the world."

II.

Much as we may admire the character of a writer, we must judge his works solely on the basis of their own merit. It is no extenuation, therefore, of the blemishes in Whittier's poetry that his life was singularly free from blemish. And flaws in his poetry are frequent. One of them is an inequality due to diffuseness. Whittier lacked the stern censorship to reject commonplace stanzas and the artistic judgment to know when to leave off. He possessed from the beginning a fatal facility and a tendency to let the first effusion pass without subsequent toning up. This weakness grew in the days of controversy, when he learned to write verses much as he wrote editorials, and often on subjects that were not poetical; and it finally became so ingrained that nothing were easier than to name a long list of his poems that miss excellence only through the want of a slight compression and revision. A kindred flaw is the badness of many of his rhymes. Dialect may explain, though it cannot excuse, such lame resemblances as *Martha* and *swarthy*, *pasture* and *faster*; but many imperfections of the kind may be accounted for only on the ground of slipshod method. A third and very grave defect is the willingness to moralize in season and out of season. Such a thing we may expect from a devout

mind that is eager to make poetry serve the occasion and not the occasion poetry, but it is opposed to the very fundamentals of art. It spoils in Whittier the structural symmetry of such vigorous ballads as *Barclay of Ury*, and obtrudes disagreeably upon many delightful passages.

There are three main themes that engaged Whittier—reform, religion, and New England life. Their expression, we may note, came often through the ballad form, the measure best suited to him; for he sang more by ear than by a discriminating knowledge of technique. Indeed, he exceeded the rest of our poets in every quality of the balladist except the first and most essential—that of narrative power. In this he was inferior to Longfellow.

His reform pieces fall largely in the abolition period, but they include all his poems that make martial protest against evil or ring with the praise of martyrdom. As a rule they are imperative rather than artistic, blaring rather than substantially based. But their scorn and invectives were weapons in great crusades. Time has lessened the value of the majority of them—for in poetry, as in life,

“The Gods approve
The depth, and not the tumult, of the soul.”

Yet a few remain as trumpet-blasts in the cause of progress, as the incarnation of the militant spirit. By far the most notable, though among the most temperate, of them is *Ichabod*, which was written in sor-

row rather than in anger when Daniel Webster seemed to have deserted the opponents of slavery.

A much greater importance attaches to his religious pieces, and these easily stamp him our foremost religious poet. The style of the Bible is frequently traceable in his pages, its spirit practically always. This would suggest that with him the religious element is pervasive rather than prominent. Such is partly the case. A sentiment of worship, fervent, wholesome, and beautiful, greets us in unsuspected places; and beyond his calls to zealous action we hear the gentler notes by which we may know him as an apostle of the meek and lowly Nazarene—as a pure, simple-hearted prophet in an age when doubt and disbelief were not wanting. Yet his faith is also outspoken. He has left behind him an array of hymns, some of them to be numbered with his highest achievements. The supreme expression of his buoyant and brotherly creed may be found in two poems, *My Triumph* and *The Eternal Goodness*.

Most of all is he the poet of New England. In sympathetic pictures of her deeds, her legends, and her everyday rural life he stands alone. Every word that he utters about her is intrinsically genuine, for it comes from a first-hand knowledge of both her glories and her faults. Here lies the key, perhaps, of his chief limitation and his greatest distinction. He is not truly a national poet because he finds his material in one group of states; but it is to be remembered that those states have been broadly influential and that he sings of them with fidelity. It

is a matter of slight consequence that now and then he admits into his unstudied verse an incongruity, as in naming a typical farm girl Maud Muller. It is also of little importance that no such character as Hosea Biglow is born of his genius. We feel that miles and miles of social and intellectual distance lie between Lowell and the people over whom his imagination plays. Not so with Whittier. He is of the same stuff, though more plentifully endowed. The misery of the loveless farm home he graphically paints in the Prelude to *Among the Hills* (ll. 44-98). His pride in honest toil is conveyed in the rhetorical stanzas of the *Songs of Labor*. The more beautiful aspects of the life he has shared, idealized by memory, give a wistful tenderness to *Telling the Bees*, *a Sea Dream*, *My Playmate*, *In School-Days*, *Marguerite*, and *The Barefoot Boy*; and reach a consummate expression in *Snow-Bound*. Other poets of the section know the ways of the cities and speak well enough on more general themes—but none are so local as he; none have sifted so thoroughly the life of the thrifty, plain, and earnest common people or have set it forth in numbers with equal truth and charm.

III.

In *Snow-Bound* we have an accurate portrayal of the Whittier household during the long and lonely months of winter. Before us as they lived and were are the various inmates of the home—besides the poet himself, the father, mother, uncle, aunt, brother

Matthew, sisters Mary and Elizabeth, school-master (George Haskell), and passionate, eccentric, half-fanatical guest, Harriet Livermore. We see their every-day life, their quaint customs, and their methods of beguiling the tedium of imprisonment. And we almost feel, at the end, as if we ourselves had been among them.

The poem has comparatively few of the prevalent flaws of Whittier's verse, and, on the other hand, it is full of his characteristic merits. Grammar and syntax are handled loosely in a few places, as in the latter half of l. 182. Accents are occasionally shifted, as in l. 310 and l. 719. But bad rhymes, though not absent, are not numerous. Compactness and unity are secured, to a greater extent than is usual with Whittier, through a fairly close adherence to the main theme and a suppression of the tendency to moralize. The poem exhibits a sense of proportion, a balance between restraint and adequacy, very rare in Whittier; and blends the meditations admirably with the tone of the whole. Color and contrast are employed, not only in details, but also in the choice of guests for the circle by the fireside. There is the usual frugality of pretentious decoration. The movement is easy and natural. Especially to be commended is the concord between an imaginative idealism and a homely realism, and the facility of transition from one to the other. In ll. 15-40, for instance, we pass from the former quality to the latter, back again to the former, and thence once more to the latter; and these changes are managed so well as to enhance the charm, the

impressiveness, and the convincing reality of the passage.

Finally, we should remember that *Snow-Bound* enshrines in artistic form a phase of life that was and still is typical of no mean portion of our continent. Hence it seems assured of a sectional, if not a national, immortality. In less than a thousand lines of verse Whittier does for us what countless diaries have attempted, without surpassing his fidelity to fact or approaching his power to interpret.

SNOW-BOUND.

A WINTER IDYL.

"As the Spirits of Darkness be stronger in the dark, so good Spirits which be Angels of Light are augmented not only by the Divine light of the Sun, but also by our common Wood Fire: and as the Celestial Fire drives away dark spirits, so also this our Fire of Wood doth the same."—COR. AGRIPPA, *Occult Philosophy*, Book I. ch. v.

"Announced by all the trumpets of the sky,
Arrives the snow; and, driving o'er the fields,
Seems nowhere to alight; the whited air
Hides hills and woods, the river and the heaven,
And veils the farm-house at the garden's end.
The sled and traveller stopped, the courier's feet
Delayed, all friends shut out, the housemates sit
Around the radiant fireplace, enclosed
In a tumultuous privacy of storm."

—Emerson, *The Snow Storm*.

The sun that brief December day
Rose cheerless over hills of gray,
And, darkly circled, gave at noon
A sadder light than waning moon.
Slow tracing down the thickening sky
Its mute and ominous prophecy,
A portent seeming less than threat,
It sank from sight before it set.
A chill no coat, however stout,
Of homespun stuff could quite shut out,
A hard, dull bitterness of cold,
That checked, mid-vein, the circling race
Of life-blood in the sharpened face,
The coming of the snow-storm told.
The wind blew east; we heard the roar
Of ocean on his wintry shore,

And felt the strong pulse throbbing there
Beat with low rhythm our inland air.

20 Meanwhile we did our nightly chores,—
Brought in the wood from out of doors,
Littered the stalls, and from the mows
Raked down the herd's-grass for the cows :
Heard the horse whinnying for his corn ;
And, sharply clashing horn on horn,
25 Impatient down the stanchion rows
The cattle shake their walnut bows ;
While, peering from his early perch
Upon the scaffold's pole of birch,
The cock his crested helmet bent
30 And down his querulous challenge sent.
Unwarmed by any sunset light
The gray day darkened into night,
A night made hoary with the swarm
And whirl-dance of the blinding storm,
35 As zigzag wavering to and fro
Crossed and recrossed the wingèd snow :
And ere the early bedtime came
The white drift piled the window-frame,
And through the glass the clothes-line posts
40 Looked in like tall and sheeted ghosts.

So all night long the storm roared on :
The morning broke without a sun ;
In tiny spherule traced with lines
Of Nature's geometric signs,
45 In starry flake and pellicle

All day the hoary meteor fell :
And, when the second morning shone,
We looked upon a world unknown,
On nothing we could call our own.
50 Around the glistening wonder bent
The blue walls of the firmament,
No cloud above, no earth below,—
A universe of sky and snow !
The old familiar sights of ours
55 Took marvellous shapes ; strange domes and
towers
Rose up where sty or corn-crib stood,
Or garden-wall or belt of wood :
A smooth white mound the brush-pile showed,
A fenceless drift what once was road :
60 The bridle-post an old man sat
With loose-flung coat and high cocked hat ;
The well-curb had a Chinese roof ;
And even the long sweep, high aloof,
In its slant splendor, seemed to tell
65 Of Pisa's leaning miracle.

A prompt, decisive man, no breath
Our father wasted : "Boys, a path !"
Well pleased, (for when did farmer boy
Count such a summons less than joy ?)
70 Our buskins on our feet we drew :
With mittened hands, and caps drawn low,
To guard our necks and ears from snow,
We cut the solid whiteness through ;
And, where the drift was deepest, made

15 A tunnel walled and overlaid
With dazzling crystal : we had read
Of rare Aladdin's wondrous cave,
And to our own his name we gave,
With many a wish the luck were ours
80 To test his lamp's supernal powers.
We reached the barn with merry din,
And roused the prisoned brutes within.
The old horse thrust his long head out,
And grave with wonder gazed about ;
85 The cock his lusty greeting said,
And forth his speckled harem led ;
The oxen lashed their tails, and hooked,
And mild reproach of hunger looked ;
The hornèd patriarch of the sheep,
90 Like Egypt's Amun roused from sleep,
Shook his sage head with gesture mute,
And emphasized with stamp of foot.

All day the gusty north-wind bore
The loosening drift its breath before ;
95 Low circling round its southern zone,
The sun through dazzling snow-mist shone.
No church-bell lent its Christian tone
To the savage air, no social smoke
Curled over woods of snow-hung oak.
100 A solitude made more intense
By dreary-voicèd elements, .
The shrieking of the mindless wind,
The moaning tree-boughs swaying blind,
And on the glass the unmeaning beat

105 Of ghostly finger-tips of sleet.
 Beyond the circle of our hearth
 No welcome sound of toil or mirth
 Unbound the spell, and testified
 Of human life and thought outside.
 110 We minded that the sharpest ear
 The buried brooklet could not hear,
 The music of whose liquid lip
 Had been to us companionship,
 And, in our lonely life, had grown
 115 To have an almost human tone.

As night drew on, and, from the crest
 Of wooded knolls that ridged the west,
 The sun, a snow-blown traveller, sank
 From sight beneath the smothering bank,
 120 We piled with care our nightly stack
 Of wood against the chimney-back,—
 The oaken log, green, huge, and thick,
 And on its top the stout back-stick;
 The knotty forestick laid apart,
 125 And filled between with curious art
 The ragged brush; then, hovering near,
 We watched the first red blaze appear,
 Heard the sharp crackle, caught the gleam
 On whitewashed wall and sagging beam,
 130 Until the old, rude-furnished room
 Burst, flower-like, into rosy bloom;
 While radiant with a mimic flame
 Outside the sparkling drift became,
 And through the bare-boughed lilac-tree

135 Our own warm hearth seemed blazing free.
The crane and pendent trammels showed,
The Turk's heads on the andirons glowed ;
While childish fancy, prompt to tell
The meaning of the miracle,
140 Whispered the old rhyme: "*Under the tree
When fire outdoors burns merrily,
There the witches are making tea.*"

The moon above the eastern wood
Shone at its full; the hill-range stood
145 Transfigured in the silver flood,
Its blown snows flashing cold and keen,
Dead white, save where some sharp ravine
Took shadow, or the sombre green
Of hemlocks turned to pitchy black
150 Against the whiteness of their back.
For such a world and such a night
Most fitting that unwarming light,
Which only seemed where'er it fell
To make the coldness visible.

155 Shut in from all the world without,
We sat the clean-winged hearth about,
Content to let the north-wind roar
In baffled rage at pane and door,
While the red logs before us beat
160 The frost-line back with tropic heat;
And ever, when a louder blast
Shook beam and rafter as it passed,
The merrier up its roaring draught

65 The great throat of the chimney laughed,
The house-dog on his paws outspread
Laid to the fire his drowsy head,
The cat's dark silhouette on the wall
A couchant tiger's seemed to fall;
And, for the winter fireside meet,
70 Between the andirons' straddling feet,
The mug of cider simmered slow,
The apples sputtered in a row,
And, close at hand, the basket stood
With nuts from brown October's wood.

75 What matter how the night behaved?
What matter how the north-wind raved?
Blow high, blow low, not all its snow
Could quench our hearth-fire's ruddy glow.
O Time and Change!—with hair as gray
80 As was my sire's that winter day,
How strange it seems, with so much gone
Of life and love, to still live on!
Ah, brother! only I and thou
Are left of all that circle now,—
85 The dear home faces whereupon
That fitful firelight paled and shone.
Henceforward, listen as we will,
The voices of that hearth are still;
Look where we may, the wide earth o'er.
90 Those lighted faces smile no more.
We tread the paths their feet have worn,
We sit beneath their orchard trees,
We hear, like them, the hum of bees

And rustle of the bladed corn ;
195 We turn the pages that they read,
 Their written words we linger o'er,
But in the sun they cast no shade,
No voice is heard, no sign is made,
 No step is on the conscious floor !
200 Yet Love will dream and Faith will trust
 (Since He who knows our need is just)
That somehow, somewhere, meet we must.
Alas for him who never sees
The stars shine through his cypress-trees !
205 Who, hopeless, lays his dead away,
Nor looks to see the breaking day
Across the mournful marbles play !
Who hath not learned, in hours of faith,
 The truth to flesh and sense unknown,
210 That Life is ever lord of Death,
 And Love can never lose its own !

We sped the time with stories old,
Wrought puzzles out, and riddles told,
Or stammered from our school-book lore
215 "The chief of Gambia's golden shore."
How often since, when all the land
Was clay in Slavery's shaping hand,
As if a far-blown trumpet stirred
The languorous, sin-sick air, I heard
220 "*Does not the voice of reason cry,
 Claim the first right which Nature gave,
From the red scourge of bondage fly
 Nor deign to live a burdened slave !*"

Our father rode again his ride
225 On Memphremagog's wooded side;
Sat down again to moose and samp
In trapper's hut and Indian camp;
Lived o'er the old idyllic ease
Beneath St. Francois' hemlock trees;
230 Again for him the moonlight shone
On Norman cap and bodiced zone;
Again he heard the violin play
Which led the village dance away,
And mingled in its merry whirl
235 The grandam and the laughing girl.
Or, nearer home, our steps he led
Where Salisbury's level marshes spread
Mile-wide as flies the laden bee;
Where merry mowers, hale and strong,
240 Swept, scythe on scythe, their swaths along
The low green prairies of the sea.
We shared the fishing off Boar's Head,
And round the rocky Isles of Shoals
The hake-broil on the driftwood coals;
245 The chowder on the sand-beach made,
Dipped by the hungry, steaming hot,
With spoons of clam-shell from the pot.
We heard the tales of witchcraft old,
And dream and sign and marvel told
250 To sleepy listeners as they lay
Stretched idly on the salted hay,
Adrift along the winding shores,
When favoring breezes deigned to blow

255 The square sail of the gundalow,
And idle lay the useless oars.

Our mother, while she turned her wheel
Or run the new-knit stocking-heel,
Told how the Indian hordes came down
At midnight on Cochecho town,
260 And how her own great-uncle bore
His cruel scalp-mark to fourscore.
Recalling, in her fitting phrase,
 So rich and picturesque and free
 (The common unrhymed poetry
265 Of simple life and country ways),
The story of her early days,—
She made us welcome to her home;
Old hearths grew wide to give us room;
We stole with her a frightened look
270 At the gray wizard's conjuring-book,
The fame whereof went far and wide
Through all the simple country-side;
We heard the hawks at twilight play,
The boat-horn on Piscataqua,
275 The loon's weird laughter far away;
We fished her little trout-brook, knew
What flowers in wood and meadow grew,
What sunny hillsides autumn-brown
She climbed to shake the ripe nuts down,
280 Saw where in sheltered cove and bay
The duck's black squadron anchored lay,
And heard the wild geese calling loud
Beneath the gray November cloud.

285 Then, haply, with a look more grave,
And soberer tone, some tale she gave
From painful Sewel's ancient tome,
Beloved in every Quaker home,
Of faith fire-winged by martyrdom.
Or Chalkley's Journal, old and quaint,—
290 Gentlest of skippers, rare sea-saint!—
Who, when the dreary calms prevailed,
And water-butt and bread-cask failed,
And cruel, hungry eyes pursued
His portly presence, mad for food,
295 With dark hints muttered under breath
Of casting lots for life or death,
Offered, if Heaven withheld supplies,
To be himself the sacrifice.
Then, suddenly, as if to save
300 The good man from his lying grave,
A ripple on the water grew,
A school of porpoise flashed in view.
"Take, eat," he said, "and be content;
These fishes in my stead are sent
305 By Him who gave the tangled ram
To spare the child of Abraham."

Our uncle, innocent of books,
Was rich in lore of fields and brooks,
The ancient teachers never dumb
310 Of Nature's unhoused lyceum.
In moons and tides and weather wise,
He read the clouds as prophecies,
And foul or fair could well divine,

By many an occult hint and sign,
315 Holding the cunning-warded keys
To all the woodcraft mysteries;
Himself to Nature's heart so near
That all her voices in his ear
Of beast or bird had meanings clear,
320 Like Apollonius of old,
Who knew the tales the sparrows told,
Or Hermes, who interpreted
What the sage cranes of Nilus said;
A simple, guileless, childlike man,
325 Content to live where life began;
Strong only on his native grounds,
The little world of sights and sounds
Whose girdle was the parish bounds,
Whereof his fondly partial pride
330 The common features magnified,
As Surrey hills to mountains grew
In White of Selborne's loving view,—
He told how teal and loon he shot,
And how the eagle's eggs he got,
335 The feats on pond and river done,
The prodigies of rod and gun;
Till, warming with the tales he told,
Forgotten was the outside cold,
The bitter wind unheeded blew,
340 From ripening corn the pigeons flew,
The partridge drummed i' the wood, the mink
Went fishing down the river brink.
In fields with bean or clover gay,
The woodchuck, like a hermit gray,

345 Peered from the doorway of his cell;
The muskrat plied the mason's trade,
And tier by tier his mud-walls laid;
And from the shagbark overhead
The grizzled squirrel dropped his shell.

350 Next, the dear aunt, whose smile of cheer
And voice in dreams I see and hear,—
The sweetest woman ever Fate
Perverse denied a household mate,
Who, lonely, homeless, not the less
355 Found peace in love's unselfishness,
And welcome whereso'er she went,
A calm and gracious element,
Whose presence seemed the sweet income
And womanly atmosphere of home,—
360 Called up her girlhood memories
The huskings and the apple-bees,
The sleigh-rides and the summer sails,
Weaving through all the poor details
And homespun warp of circumstance
365 A golden woof-thread of romance.
For well she kept her genial mood
And simple faith of maidenhood;
Before her still a cloud-land lay,
The mirage loomed across her way;
370 The morning dew, that dried so soon
With others, glistened at her noon;
Through years of toil and soil and care,
From glossy tress to thin gray hair,
All unprofaned she held apart

375 The virgin fancies of the heart.
Be shame to him of woman born
Who had for such but thought of scorn.

There, too, our elder sister plied
Her evening task the stand beside;
A full, rich nature, free to trust,
380 Truthful and almost sternly just,
Impulsive, earnest, prompt to act,
And make her generous thought a fact,
Keeping with many a light disguise
The secret of self-sacrifice.

385 O heart sore-tried! thou hast the best
That Heaven itself could give thee,—rest,
Rest from all bitter thoughts and things!

How many a poor one's blessing went
With thee beneath the low green tent
390 Whose curtain never outward swings!

As one who held herself a part
Of all she saw, and let her heart
Against the household bosom lean,
Upon the motley-braided mat
395 Our youngest and our dearest sat,
Lifting her large, sweet, asking eyes,
Now bathed within the fadeless green
And holy peace of Paradise.

Oh, looking from some heavenly hill,
400 Or from the shade of saintly palms,
Or silver reach of river calms,
Do those large eyes behold me still?
With me one little year ago:—

The chill weight of the winter snow

405

For months upon her grave has lain ;
And now, when summer south-winds blow

And brier and harebell bloom again,
I tread the pleasant paths we trod,
I see the violet-sprinkled sod,

410

Whereon she leaned, too frail and weak
The hillside flowers she loved to seek,
Yet following me where'er I went
With dark eyes full of love's content.

415

The birds are glad ; the brier-rose fills
The air with sweetness ; all the hills
Stretch green to June's unclouded sky ;
But still I wait with ear and eye
For something gone which should be nigh,
A loss in all familiar things,
In flower that blooms, and bird that sings.
And yet, dear heart ! remembering thee,

420

Am I not richer than of old ?
Safe in thy immortality,

What change can reach the wealth I hold ?

425

What chance can mar the pearl and gold
Thy love hath left in trust with me ?
And while in life's late afternoon,

Where cool and long the shadows grow,
I walk to meet the night that soon

430

Shall shape and shadow overflow,
I cannot feel that thou art far,
Since near at need the angels are ;
And when the sunset gates unbar,

Shall I not see thee waiting stand,

135 And, white against the evening star,
 The welcome of thy beckoning hand?

Brisk wielder of the birch and rule,
The master of the district school
440 Held at the fire his favored place;
 Its warm glow lit a laughing face
 Fresh-hued and fair, where scarce appeared
 The uncertain prophecy of beard.
 He teased the mitten-blinded cat,
445 Played cross-pins on my uncle's hat,
 Sang songs, and told us what befalls
 In classic Dartmouth's college halls.
 Born the wild Northern hills among,
 From whence his yeoman father wrung
450 By patient toil subsistence scant,
 Not competence and yet not want,
 He early gained the power to pay
 His cheerful, self-reliant way;
 Could doff at ease his scholar's gown
455 To peddle wares from town to town;
 Or through the long vacation's reach
 In lonely lowland districts teach,
 Where all the droll experience found
 At stranger hearths in boarding round,
460 The moonlit skater's keen delight,
 The sleigh-drive through the frosty night,
 The rustic party, with its rough
 Accompaniment of blind-man's-buff,
 And whirling plate, and forfeits paid,
465 His winter task a pastime made.

Happy the snow-locked homes wherein
He tuned his merry violin,
Or played the athlete in the barn,
Or held the good dame's winding yarn,
470 Or mirth-provoking versions told
Of classic legends rare and old,
Wherein the scenes of Greece and Rome
Had all the commonplace of home,
And little seemed at best the odds
475 'Twixt Yankee peddlers and old gods;
Where Pindus-born Arachthus took
The guise of any grist-mill brook,
And dread Olympus at his will
Became a huckleberry hill.

480 A careless boy that night he seemed;
But at his desk he had the look
And air of one who wisely schemed,
And hostage from the future took
In trained thought and lore of book.
485 Large-brained, clear-eyed,—of such as he
Shall Freedom's young apostles be,
Who, following in War's bloody trail,
Shall every lingering wrong assail;
All chains from limb and spirit strike,
490 Uplift the black and white alike;
Scatter before their swift advance
The darkness and the ignorance,
The pride, the lust, the squalid sloth,
Which nurtured Treason's monstrous growth,
495 Made murder pastime, and the hell

Of prison-torture possible;
The cruel lie of caste refute,
Old forms remould, and substitute
For Slavery's lash the freeman's will,
500 For blind routine, wise-handed skill;
A school-house plant on every hill,
Stretching in radiate nerve-lines thence
The quick wires of intelligence;
Till North and South together brought
505 Shall own the same electric thought,
In peace a common flag salute,
And, side by side in labor's free
And unresentful rivalry,
Harvest the fields wherein they fought.

510 Another guest that winter night
Flashed back from lustrous eyes the light.
Unmarked by time, and yet not young,
The honeyed music of her tongue
And words of meekness scarcely told
515 A nature passionate and bold,
Strong, self-concentred, spurning guide,
Its milder features dwarfed beside
Her unbent will's majestic pride.
She sat among us, at the best,
520 A not unfeared, half-welcome guest,
Rebuking with her cultured phrase
Our homeliness of words and ways.
A certain pard-like, treacherous grace
Swayed the lithe limbs and dropped the lash,
525 Lent the white teeth their dazzling flash;

And under low brows, black with night,
Rayed out at times a dangerous light;
The sharp heat-lightnings of her face
Presaging ill to him whom Fate
530 Condemned to share her love or hate.
A woman tropical, intense
In thought and act, in soul and sense,
She blended in a like degree
The vixen and the devotee,
535 Revealing with each freak or feint
The temper of Petruchio's Kate,
The raptures of Siena's saint.
Her tapering hand and rounded wrist
Had facile power to form a fist;
540 The warm, dark languish of her eyes
Was never safe from wrath's surprise.
Brows saintly calm and lips devout
Knew every change of scowl and pout;
And the sweet voice had notes more high
545 And shrill for social battle-cry.
Since then what old cathedral town
Has missed her pilgrim staff and gown,
What convent-gate has held its lock
Against the challenge of her knock!
550 Through Smyrna's plague-hushed thorough-
fares,
Up sea-set Malta's rocky stairs,
Gray olive slopes of hills that hem
Thy tombs and shrines, Jerusalem,
Or startling on her desert throne
555 The crazy Queen of Lebanon

With claims fantastic as her own,
Her tireless feet have held their way;
And still, unrestful, bowed, and gray,
She watches under Eastern skies,

560 With hope each day renewed and fresh,
The Lord's quick coming in the flesh,
Whereof she dreams and prophesies!

Where'er her troubled path may be,
The Lord's sweet pity with her go!
565 The outward wayward life we see,
The hidden springs we may not know.
Nor is it given us to discern

What threads the fatal sisters spun,
Through what ancestral years has run
570 The sorrow with the woman born,
What forged her cruel chain of moods,
What set her feet in solitudes,

And held the love within her mute,
What mingled madness in the blood,
575 A lifelong discord and annoy,

Water of tears with oil of joy,
And hid within the folded bud
Perversities of flower and fruit.

It is not ours to separate
580 The tangled skein of will and fate,
To show what metes and bounds should stand
Upon the soul's debatable land,
And between choice and Providence
Divide the circle of events;

585 But He who knows our frame is just,

Merciful and compassionate,
And full of sweet assurances
And hope for all the language is,
That He remembereth we are dust!

590 At last the great logs, crumbling low,
Sent out a dull and duller glow,
The bull's-eye watch that hung in view,
Ticking its weary circuit through,
Pointed with mutely-warning sign
595 Its black hand to the hour of nine.
That sign the pleasant circle broke:
My uncle ceased his pipe to smoke,
Knocked from its bowl the refuse gray,
And laid it tenderly away,
600 Then roused himself to safely cover
The dull red brand with ashes over.
And while, with care, our mother laid
The work aside, her steps she stayed
One moment, seeking to express
605 Her grateful sense of happiness
For food and shelter, warmth and health,
And love's contentment more than wealth,
With simple wishes (not the weak,
Vain prayers which no fulfilment seek,
610 But such as warm the generous heart,
O'er-prompt to do with Heaven its part)
That none might lack, that bitter night,
For bread and clothing, warmth and light.

Within our beds awhile we heard

615 The wind that round the gables roared,
 With now and then a ruder shock,
 Which made our very bedsteads rock.
 We heard the loosened clapboards tost,
 The board-nails snapping in the frost;
620 And on us, through the unplastered wall,
 Felt the light sifted snow-flakes fall;
 But sleep stole on, as sleep will do
 When hearts are light and life is new;
 Faint and more faint the murmurs grew,
625 Till in the summer-land of dreams
 They softened to the sound of streams,
 Low stir of leaves, and dip of oars,
 And lapsing waves on quiet shores.

 Next morn we wakened with the shout
630 Of merry voices high and clear;
 And saw the teamsters drawing near
 To break the drifted highways out.
 Down the long hillside treading slow
 We saw the half-buried oxen go,
635 Shaking the snow from heads uptost,
 Their straining nostrils white with frost.
 Before our door the straggling train
 Drew up, an added team to gain.
 The eiders threshed their hands a-cold,
640 Passed, with the cider-mug, their jokes
 From lip to lip; the younger folks
 Down the loose snow-banks, wrestling, rolled,
 Then toiled again the cavalcade
 O'er windy hill, through clogged ravine,

645 And woodland paths that wound between
Low drooping pine-boughs winter-weighed.
From every barn a team afoot,
At every house a new recruit,
Where, drawn by Nature's subtlest law,
650 Haply the watchful young men saw
Sweet doorway pictures of the curls
And curious eyes of merry girls,
Lifting their hands in mock defence
Against the snow-balls' compliments,
655 And reading in each missive tost
The charm which Eden never lost.

We heard once more the sleigh-bells' sound;
And, following where the teamsters led,
The wise old Doctor went his round,
660 Just pausing at our door to say,
In the brief autocratic way
Of one who, prompt at Duty's call,
Was free to urge her claim on all,

That some poor neighbor sick abed
665 At night our mother's aid would need.
For, one in generous thought and deed,
What mattered in the sufferer's sight
The Quaker matron's inward light,
The Doctor's mail of Calvin's creed?
670 All hearts confess the saints elect
Who, twain in faith, in love agree,
And melt not in an acid sect
The Christian pearl of charity!

So days went on: a week had passed

675 Since the great world was heard from last.
The Almanac we studied o'er,
Read and reread our little store
Of books and pamphlets, scarce a score;
One harmless novel, mostly hid
680 From younger eyes, a book forbid,
And poetry, (or good or bad,
A single book was all we had,)
Where Ellwood's meek, drab-skirted Muse,
A stranger to the heathen Nine,
685 Sang, with a somewhat nasal whine,
The wars of David and the Jews.
At last the floundering carrier bore
The village paper to our door.
Lo! broadening outward as we read,
690 To warmer zones the horizon spread;
In panoramic length unrolled
We saw the marvel that it told.
Before us passed the painted Creeks,
And daft McGregor on his raids
695 In Costa Rica's everglades.
And up Taygetus winding slow
Rode Ypsilanti's Mainote Greeks,
A Turk's head at each saddle bow!
Welcome to us its week-old news,
700 Its corner for the rustic Muse,
Its monthly gauge of snow and rain,
Its record, mingling in a breath
The wedding bell and dirge of death;
Jest, anecdote, and love-lorn tale,
705 The latest culprit sent to jail;

Its hue and cry of stolen and lost,
Its vendue sales and goods at cost,
And traffic calling loud for gain.
We felt the stir of hall and street,
710 The pulse of life that round us beat;
The chill embargo of the snow
Was melted in the genial glow;
Wide swung again our ice-locked door,
And all the world was ours once more!

715 Clasp, Angel of the backward look
And folded wings of ashen gray
And voice of echoes far away,
The brazen covers of thy book;
The weird palimpsest old and vast,
720 Wherein thou hid'st the spectral past;
Where, closely mingling, pale and glow
The characters of joy and woe;
The monographs of outlived years,
Or smile-illumed or dim with tears,
725 Green hills of life that slope to death,
And haunts of home, whose vistaed trees
Shade off to mournful cypresses
With the white amaranths underneath.
Even while I look, I can but heed
730 The restless sands' incessant fall,
Importunate hours that hours succeed,
Each clamorous with its own sharp need,
And duty keeping pace with all.
Shut down and clasp the heavy lids;
735 I hear again the voice that bids

The dreamer leave his dream midway
For larger hopes and graver fears:
Life greatens in these later years,
The century's aloe flowers to-day!

- 740 Yet, haply, in some lull of life,
Some Truce of God which breaks its strife,
The worldling's eyes shall gather dew,
 Dreaming in throngful city ways
Of winter joys his boyhood knew;
745 And dear and early friends—the few
Who yet remain—shall pause to view
 These Flemish pictures of old days;
Sit with me by the homestead hearth,
And stretch the hands of memory forth
750 To warm them at the wood-fire's blaze!
And thanks untraced to lips unknown
Shall greet me like the odors blown
From unseen meadows newly mown,
Or lilies floating in some pond,
755 Wood-fringed, the wayside gaze beyond;
The traveller owns the grateful sense
Of sweetness near, he knows not whence,
And, pausing, takes with forehead bare
The benediction of the air.

NOTES ON "THE RAVEN."

Line 2. *Forgotten lore.* Poe prided himself upon his knowledge of old books that nobody else read. This knowledge was not always profound, for his scholarship was wide rather than thorough; but it served his turn in ministering to many a poetic effect. Naturally such an attribute of his own he gave to some of his characters. Of *Berenice*, one of the tales, Professor Woodberry says: "In it Poe's hero first comes upon the stage, a man struck with some secret disease, given to the use of drugs and to musing over old books in an antiquated and gloomy chamber, and reserved for a horrible experience."

10. *Lenore.* A favorite word with Poe because of its sonorous sound. Read the opening stanzas of *Ulalume* for an example of his musical use of fictitious proper names.

13. Cf. *The Sleeper*:

The bodiless airs, a wizard rout,
Flit through thy chamber in and out,
And wave the curtain canopy
So fitfully—so fearfully,

Cf. also the fourth stanza in the conclusion of *Lady Geraldine's Courtship* by Mrs. Browning; the line,

With a murmurous stir uncertain, in the air the purple
curtain,

is clearly echoed by Poe.

26. This line and lines 63-66 may be applied to the poet himself.

41. *Pallas* was the Greek goddess of wisdom, and the replies of the bird, thus associated with her, become the words of fate.

47. *Plutonian shore*: the land of Pluto, Greek god of the underworld.

48. *Nevermore.* Another word the sonorous roll of which recommended it to Poe. Cf. *Sonnet to Zante*:

No more! alas, that magical sad sound,
Transforming all!

81. "*Wretch*"! The lover addresses himself. He has three objects of hope—forgetfulness, an allaying balm, and a reunion with his lost love. These are to be dispelled in turn. Perhaps the frantic inquiries of the lover are led

less by the expectation of a favorable answer than by "the human thirst for self-torture."

82. *Nepenthe*: a potion that banishes pain and induces forgetfulness.

89. *Balm in Gilead*: a reference to *Jeremiah* 8:22—"Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there?"

93. *Aidenn* Eden.

106. Would this have been possible?

NOTES ON "THE COURTSHIP OF MILES STANDISH."

1. *Old Colony*: a name given to Plymouth after the "Massachusetts Bay" settlements had been made around Boston and Salem.

3. *Cordova* is a city in Spain. It was celebrated for a preparation of goat-skin. Look up the derivation of *cordwainer*.

8. *Sword of Damascus*. The Saracens were noted for their workmanship in steel. In the twenty-seventh chapter of Scott's *Talisman*, which recounts the trial of skill between the Saladin and Richard Coeur de Lion, we have proof of the finely tempered edge of the weapons made at Damascus.

19. Ancient Britain was overrun in the fifth century by Angles, Saxons, and other Teutonic tribes. When, a century later, Pope *Gregory* the Great, then a deacon, saw the fair complexions of some captives in Rome, he inquired who they were. The answer was, "Angles"; whereupon he exclaimed, "*Not Angles but Angels!*"

25. *Flanders*, *Hainault*, and *Brabant*, all of which are mentioned in l. 396, were counties of the Netherlands. In the war of the United Provinces, as Holland was then called, for independence from Spain, many English soldiers and adventurers besides Standish joined the forces of the patriots.

42. This line gives one of the secrets of Caesar's popularity with his men.

64. Of the one hundred Pilgrims fifty died during the first "terrible winter." The remainder took the method here explained of concealing the extent of the loss.

85-86. Are these lines effective from the standpoint of the story-teller's art? Do they hint new relations and hurry us on to the next section?

100. *Better be first, he said.* The incident back of these well-known lines is given in Plutarch's *Life of Caesar* (Clough's translation) thus:

"In his journey, as he was crossing the Alps and passing by a small village of the barbarians with but few inhabitants, and those wretchedly poor, his companions asked the question among themselves by way of mockery if there were any canvassing for offices there; any contention which should be uppermost, or feuds of great men one against another. To which Caesar made answer seriously, 'For my part I had rather be the first man among these fellows, than the second man in Rome'."

106. *On a certain occasion.* See the *Commentaries*, Bk. 2, Ch. 10.

108. Caesar's *Twelfth Legion*, like Napoleon's Old Guard, was famous for its loyalty and courage.

149-150. In Shakespeare's *Henry the Fifth*, Act 5, Scene 2, there is a famous example of courtship by a man of action.

188. *Hanging gardens of verdure.* The reference is to the celebrated terraces of Babylon, erected by Nebuchadnezzar to please his wife, a Median princess, who missed the broken scenery of her native land.

206. *Astaroth* was the chief female, and *Baal* the chief male deity of the Phoenicians. They are mentioned in *Judges* 2:13 and *First Samuel* 12:10.

210. *Mayflowers*: the trailing arbutus. In England the word is used to designate the hawthorn.

225. *The Psalmist* was David.

231. *Ainsworth* was driven from England on account of his religious teachings. In Holland he published commentaries and translations.

232. *Amsterdam* was at this time tolerant to all sects. Pamphlets could be printed there that were not allowed elsewhere in Europe.

240. *What might have been.* Compare these lines from Whittier's *Maud Muller*, published four years before:

For of all sad words of tongue or pen,

The saddest are these: "It might have been!"

324. *Family arms* were permitted only to those who were of gentle lineage or had themselves been granted a coat of arms. In the head or body of the animal usually shown in heraldic designs, *argent* (silver) and *gules* (red) were often conspicuous colors.

344. *Sank the City of God.* See *Revelation* 21:10-27.

349. The winds, in Greek mythology, were confined in caves.

361-3. *David*, because of his love for *Bathsheba*, had her husband, *Uriah*, sent to the front in battle that he might be killed. For this act David was reproached by the prophet *Nathan*.

415. Froissart relates in his *Chronicles* how "a squyer of the kynges. . . John Standysshe", slew the rebel, Wat Tyler, in the presence of Richard the Second. For this deed Standish was knighted.

421. When Caesar saw his old friend among the murderers, he cried, *Et tu, Brute?* (You too, Brutus?) and ceased to resist.

442. *The excellent Elder of Plymouth*: William Brewster.

444. *They had sifted the wheat*. Many of the dissenters of England, France, and Holland renounced their faith on account of persecution. Of the remainder only the most zealous came to America.

448. *A Bible*: not the King James version, but the Geneva Bible, the annotations of which are colored by the stern theology of Calvin.

450. Such a challenge was actually sent—in 1622, however—by Canonieus, chief of the Narragansetts. It was Governor Bradford who intimidated the Indians by sending back powder and bullets. The words paraphrased by the poet in lines 457-8 belong, not to Brewster, but to John Robinson, former minister of the congregation; they were spoken when Robinson heard of the first encounter with the Indians.

501. The return voyage was begun on April 15, 1621.

605. *Gurnet*: a headland north of Plymouth Bay.

606. The *island* is Clark Island, the *cape of sand* probably Cape Cod. *The Field of the First Encounter*, on Cape Cod, was the scene of an early skirmish between an exploring party and the Indians.

626. Cf. *Genesis* 1:2: "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

656. A ghost could not speak until it was addressed. A fine use of this tradition is made in the opening scene of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

719 ff. In the days when pilgrimages to the Holy Land were undertaken, many ascetic practices were introduced into the journeys. One of these methods of penance is here described.

755. For *Goliath of Gath* see *First Samuel* 17:4-51. For *Og, king of Bashan*, see *Deuteronomy* 3:1-11.

765. *Squanto*, a friendly Indian, having an eye to his

own importance, had told the neighboring tribes that the white men kept the plague in their cellars and that he could persuade them to unloose it.

787. Remember that the Indians had little respect for their women.

826. *Corn* is here used in the old sense of small grain. Maize was not cultivated in Europe before America was colonized.

828. *Merestead* means, literally, bounded or boundary place. *Glebe* (in the next line) means turf or sod.

838-9. Compare the closing lines of this section; also the lines from *Maidenhood*:

Standing, with reluctant feet,
Where the brook and river meet.

843-4. Glass was not unknown at this time, but even in Europe oiled paper, which was cheaper, was far more common.

846. The present house of the Aldens is thought to be on the site of the original one.

858. See *Proverbs* 31:10-31.

867. In Greek mythology the thread of each human being's life was spun out and severed by the three Fates.

872. *Bertha*, wife of Rudolph the Second of Burgundy, was famed for her domestic virtues. She was especially noted for her spinning.

881-2. Is it natural for Alden to utter such a prophecy?

927. Look up the description of the Hebrew High-Priest and his dress in the 28th chapter of *Exodus*.

973. *Kent* is the south-eastern shire of England.

1015. See *Genesis* 24.

NOTES-ON "SNOW-BOUND."

65. The celebrated Leaning Tower of Pisa deflects from the perpendicular more than six feet in eighty.

77. The story of Aladdin and his lamp may be found in *The Arabian Nights*.

90. *Amun*, or *Ammon*, was an Egyptian deity one of whose attributes was represented under the guise of a ram.

152-154. Cf. Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Book 1, ll. 61-63:

A dungeon horrible, on all sides round,
As one great furnace flamed; yet from those flames
No light; but rather darkness visible.

169. What is the meaning of *meet*?

204. The *cypress* is associated with death.

215. This line and four others beginning with 220 belong to the poem, *The African Chief*, by Mrs. Sarah Wentworth Morton. The poem was included in one of Whittier's school-books, *The American Preceptor*.

224 ff. Whittier explains that his father had traveled considerably in Canada. *Memphremagog* is a lake between Vermont and Canada; *St. Francis* is a river in Canada; *Salisbury* is a town in Massachusetts; *Boar's Head* is a headland on the New Hampshire coast; the *Isles of Shoals* are near the mouth of the *Piscataqua* river (between Maine and New Hampshire); and *Cochecho town* is Dover, New Hampshire.

226. *Samp*: a kind of hominy.

254. *Gundalow* (variant of gondola): in the United States, a flat-bottomed boat.

269-270. Whittier says of his mother: "She described strange people who lived on the Piscataqua and Cochecho, among whom was Bantam the sorcerer. I have in my possession the wizard's 'conjuring book', which he solemnly opened when consulted. It is a copy of Cornelius Agrippa's *Magic*, printed in 1651."

274. One of Whittier's forced rhymes. The final *a* in *Piscataqua* is pronounced like the *a* in peninsula.

276 ff. With this passage and the description of the uncle (ll. 307-349) compare *The Barefoot Boy*.

286. William Sewel's history of the Quakers. Charles Lamb praises the book in his essay, *A Quakers' Meeting*.

289. The incident which Whittier retells is given in the *Journal* of Thomas Chalkley, published in 1747.

305-6. See *Genesis* 22:1-13.

320. *Apollonius*, born in Cappadocia just before the Christian era, was a philosopher of the school of Pythagoras and an ascetic. Among the strange stories told about him were some that related how he conversed with animals and birds.

322. *Hermes Trismegistus* (i. e. the thrice-great) was a priest, philosopher, and king of Egypt, far-famed for his skill in the sciences and arts.

331-2. Gilbert White's *Natural History of Selborne*, England, is a loving and minute description of a restricted section.

330-1. Cf. Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Act. 3, Scene I:

Death,
The undiscovered country from whose bourn
No traveler returns.

420. This line is suggestive of many individual phrases and the general tone of Wordsworth's *Intimations of Immortality*.

438-85. Cf. the description of the school-master in Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*, ll. 193-216.

476. *Arachthus* is one of the five rivers that take their rise from the central peak of the mountain range of *Pindus*, in Greece.

478. *Olympus*, a celebrated mountain in Greece, was once reputed to be the home of the gods.

536. See Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*, especially the first scene of Act I and the first scene of Act II.

537. *St. Catherine of Siena* is noted for her miraculous visions and extreme self-sacrifice.

546 ff. Miss Livermore believed in the Second Advent of our Lord. Much of her later life was given up to travel, especially in the Holy Land.

568. See note on *The Courtship of Miles Standish*, l. 867.

580. Compare Shakespeare's metaphor in *All's Well that Ends Well*, Act. 4, Scene 3: "The web of our life is of mingled yarn, good and ill together."

656. Compare *Among the Hills*, ll. 395-6:

If woman lost us Eden, such
As she alone restore it.

659. Doctor Weld of Haverhill.

669. John Calvin: a great reformer and contemporary of Luther, noted for his austere life and rigid tenets.

683. Thomas Ellwood, a Quaker, was the author of a tire-some epic poem, *David's*, which deals with the life of David. He was also a friend of Milton and suggested to Milton the subject of *Paradise Regained*.

684. The *Nine Muses* were Greek goddesses, the patrons of various branches of the fine arts.

693. The *Creek Indians* were removed from Georgia beyond the Mississippi in 1826. This event, which came after much agitation and dispute, seems to have been one of the public affairs which Whittier remembered vividly from his boyhood.

694-5. Sir Gregor McGregor ineffectually sought, in 1822, to establish a colony in *Costa Rica*.

696-8. *Ypsilanti*, a patriot of Greece, found cavalry for a struggle against Turkey in the district of Maina, near the

mountain Taygetus. He was killed in 1821, but his brother lived to see the independence of Greece.

728. *Amaranths*: in mythology, a never-fading flower.

741. *The Truce of God*: a period during which, according to the terms of a famous compact of the Eleventh Century, all warfare and contention were to cease.

747. *Flemish pictures* concern themselves, as a rule, with simple subjects, treating them lovingly and in detail. The work of Rembrandt (1607-1669) is in many ways characteristic of the whole school.

751-9. Cp. with these lines George Eliot's poem, *The Choir Invisible*.

APPENDIX

(Adapted, and enlarged, from the *Manual for the Study of English Classics*, by George L. Marsh)

HELPS TO STUDY

POE'S LIFE

When and where was he born? What can you say as to his parents? By whom and in what circumstances was he brought up (p. 9)?

Where, successively, was he educated? What was his record in the higher institutions which he attended?

What became his occupation after he left West Point (p. 10)?

What had been his first publication (p. 10)? At what age? What was his first conspicuous success in literature (p. 11)? When did it come?

When did Poe marry, and whom (p. 11)? What can you say of his married life? When did his wife die? What was the effect of her death on Poe (p. 12)?

Name some of the most important newspapers and magazines with which Poe was connected (pp. 11, 12). Some of his literary associates.

What habits interfered with his success (pp. 10, 11)? Name some other great authors who have been similarly handicapped. Did any one of them resemble Poe, either personally or in his work?

When, where, and in what circumstances did he die?

Perry-Picture 33 is a portrait of Poe.

POE'S POETRY AND THE RAVEN

What basis is there for the claim that Poe is the most remarkable of American poets (p. 14)? What has been

the estimate of him abroad? Where must he be ranked in relation to the great figures in literature (p. 16), and why?

What were Poe's main theories as to poetic art (pp. 18, 19), and how did he illustrate them? Note your editor's criticism of them.

Study the structure of *The Raven*; bringing out specifically the various points mentioned by the editor. Note striking examples of adaptation of sound to sense.

What is the substance of Poe's account of the composition of this poem? Discuss the reasonableness of Poe's assertions (pp. 19, 20).

Point out resemblances between *The Raven* and *The Ancient Mariner*. What other poems may have influenced Poe in the composition of *The Raven* (p. 17)?

List the most effective examples you find of the following devices: (a) alliteration, (b) repetition, (c) internal rhyme. What do you think of the rhymes within the third and fourth lines of the middle stanza on page 23?

Tell what you consider to be the story of the poem.

LONGFELLOW'S CAREER

When and where was Longfellow born? What is noteworthy about his parents (p. 29)? When, and under what inspiration, did he begin to write?

Where did he attend college? Who was his most important classmate (p. 30)?

What occupation did Longfellow adopt, and how did he prepare for it (pp. 30, 31)? What important services did he render as a direct result of his occupation?

When did Longfellow first publish a volume of poems? What prose works had preceded it (p. 31)? What are some of his principal poetical works? What particularly important translation did he make (p. 33)?

Where did he live during most of his life, and when did he die?

What poetical qualities, and what poetical deficiencies, had Longfellow (pp. 34-36)? Have these, even the latter, an effect on his popularity?

Perry Pictures 15-21 have to do with Longfellow personally; and 1331-40, 1344, 1345, and 3298 may be used in illustration of *The Courtship of Miles Standish*.

MILES STANDISH

Note discrepancies between actual history and the representation of it in *The Courtship of Miles Standish* (pp. 37 ff.). Are these really objectionable? Give reasons for your answer. In what important respects is the poem true to history?

What is the metrical form of *Miles Standish* (p. 39)? Where else had Longfellow used it? Is it common in English?

See the editor's questions and suggestions in the Notes (pp. 148, etc.).

Why does the poet have Standish repeat the thought found in lines 36 and 115? Note other repetitions, for other purposes—e. g., pages 46 and 49.

Note bits of characteristic Puritan speech in the language of John Alden (e. g., pp. 54, 55). Is there similar language in Standish's speeches? Do you find any reason for this?

What parts of the work are most poetical—that is, what sort of material seems to inspire Longfellow most? (See hint on p. 39.)

Pick out the dramatic elements in the story. Could it be arranged in a series of scenes? What striking dramatic situations are there?

Does the end of part III (p. 63) come as a complete surprise? Is it made to seem natural and reasonable?

What striking truth as to a common fate of women in our social system does Priscilla utter more than once (as on p. 85)?

Are Alden's resolves, first to sail on the Mayflower, then not to sail, sufficiently accounted for?

Why is there so much about Standish's encounter with the Indians (part VII)?

Is it made to seem natural, even right, that Alden and Priscilla should defer their marriage till they hear of the death of Standish, and then at once arrange for it?

Does the reappearance of Standish call to mind anything in one of the other books commonly read for college entrance? Is it accounted for in any way?

Discuss the title of this poem.

WHITTIER AND SNOW-BOUND

Perry Pictures 25-30 have to do with Whittier.

When was Whittier born (p. 111)? Of what sort of people? What kind of education did he have? How did he happen to begin to write poetry?

What had Whittier to do with politics (p. 112)? With what movement was he associated, and with what results to himself? What writing did he do in support of this movement?

What are the main themes of Whittier's poetry (p. 116)? What defects are to be noted (p. 115)? In what field was his most important work done, and why (pp. 117, 118)?

When was *Snow-Bound* written (p. 114)? Is it realistic or imaginative? Illustrate specifically from the poem the various characteristics brought out on pages 119, 120.

What is the metrical form of *Snow-Bound*?

Pick out especially striking passages (e. g., bottom p. 124, top p. 125) and discuss the sources of their effectiveness.

Is the verse paragraph on pages 127, 128, a digression? Objectionable in any way? Are there other similar passages in the poem? If so, point them out specifically.

What may we assume as to the environment and expe-

periences of Whittier's father and mother in their early days (pp. 129 ff.)?

Make a list of all the books mentioned in the poem. Do you find any general characteristics prominent?

How many students have ever had experiences such as Whittier presents in *Snow-Bound*? Let them test the naturalness and accuracy of the details.

THEME SUBJECTS

1. Poe's life (pp. 9-12).
2. Character sketch of Poe. (This may be based largely on the works read; or sides may be taken and criticisms and defenses prepared.)
3. A story of the poet and "the lost Lenore."
4. Discussion of Poe's account of his writing of *The Raven* (pp. 19, 20).
5. Parodies of *The Raven*—why has the poem been so much parodied?
6. A metrical study of *The Raven*.
7. Sketch of Longfellow's life (pp. 29-33).
8. Imaginary conversation between Longfellow and Hawthorne during their college days on what they hoped to accomplish in life.
9. Character sketch of Longfellow (pp. 34-37, and various hints in the poem read).
10. Character sketches of Miles Standish, John Alden, Priscilla.
11. Dramatizations of important scenes in *The Courtship of Miles Standish*; for example, the following:
 - Standish's request (pp. 41-53).
 - John Alden at Priscilla's house (pp. 57-63).
 - His report to Standish (pp. 67-70).
 - The scene on the beach (pp. 76 ff.).
 - And so on through the poem.
12. Inconsistencies with history in *The Courtship of Miles Standish* (pp. 37-39).

13. Hexameter verse in English (pp. 39, 40; see also some book on English meters; note what other poets have used this form).

14. The life of Whittier (pp. 111-15).

15. Whittier's relation to the anti-slavery cause.

16. An imaginary conversation between Whittier and Daniel Webster, in relation to "Ichabod" (see p. 116).

17. The Whittier household as revealed in *Snow-Bound* (pp. 118 ff.).

18. A description of a snowstorm experienced by the student.

19. The books mentioned in *Snow-Bound* (indicate the nature of the principal ones, and draw conclusions as to Whittier's literary likings).

20. Poetical qualities (both merits and defects) in *Snow-Bound* (pp. 115-20).

SELECTIONS FOR CLASS READING

1. *The Raven* (pp. 21-28).
2. John Alden on his errand (pp. 57-63).
3. Miles Standish at the council (pp. 70-73).
4. The departure of the Mayflower (pp. 78-83).
5. The wedding (pp. 103-106).
6. The snow-storm (pp. 121-26).
7. The poet's faith (pp. 127, 128).
8. A nature lover (pp. 131-33).
9. Whittier's youngest sister (pp. 134-36).
10. A country school-master (pp. 136-38).
11. "Another guest" (pp. 138-41).
12. The conclusion (pp. 145, 146).





